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A CIVILIAN'S WIFE IN INDIA

VOL. II.

THE DIARY

OF

A CIVILIAN'S WIFE IN INDIA

1877—1882

5846

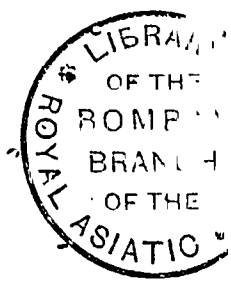
BY

MRS ROBERT MOSS KING

"'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book 's a book although there 's nothing in 't'
BYLON

"I have no other but a woman's reason;
I think him so—because I think him so'
SHAKSPERE

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS



IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

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A CIVILIAN'S WIFE IN INDIA.

CHAPTER XXI.

RIDE UP TO NAINI TÂL—BHÎM TÂL—SPIDERS' WEBS—BEAUTIFUL RÂNIKHÊT—TEA PLANTATION AT ALMÓRAH—A GODDESS'S VENGEANCE—BACK AT MEERUT.

Oct. 16, 1879.—I am writing from the Mangóli bungalow, half-way up the hill to Naini Tâl. We started in a dâk ghâri from Moradabad, reaching Kála Dungi, at the foot of the hills, at 5.30, where we slept the night in the Dâk bungalow in the midst of the forest.

The country we passed through was perfectly flat for forty miles, and quite uninteresting. All the ponds and marshes were starred over with white water-lilies, whose broad crinkly-edged leaves made resting-places for numbers of

water-wagtails, the harbingers of winter. The fields looked green and prosperous, and there was nothing to show that the demon of fever had laid his hand on the land and was claiming his victims by tens of thousands. Later in the day we entered the forest, which extends for hundreds of miles in a belt at the foot of the Himalayas. It is a primæval jungle, tangled with a dense undergrowth, and with creepers as thick as a man's arm flinging themselves like ropes from tree to tree. At a changing place some miles in the forest the men told us they often see bears and tigers, and two days ago some wild elephants passed. It is not long since an unhappy running postman met a rogue elephant who set on him and killed him.

As we were driving along I saw three bright yellow clumps on a grass bank, with some yellow butterflies hovering over them, and on looking closer we saw that the yellow clumps themselves were masses of butterflies all one upon another like a swarm of bees. I should like to have stopped and looked at them closer, but it is not

well to stop a dâk ghári—it is always uncertain when you can start again.

This morning we started at seven o'clock to ride up the hill fifteen miles; I on my own pony which was waiting for us, and Robert on a small rat-like pony not twelve hands high. His syce was enthusiastic in his praise, and assured Robert that if the pony should get the *least* tired he might beat and abuse *him*! Confidence could go no farther, and indeed the pony is a very strong good little beast. All our baggage was loaded on coolies, and the khansáma (the only servant with us except my syce) started on a hired pony. I say advisedly *started*, for it appears that after two miles the pony stood still and declined to budge. So the luckless pantlere had to leave him there and trudge farther on foot, arriving here quite exhausted about two o'clock.

No other pony can be got here, so we have to leave him behind, to come on to-morrow as best he can. We ourselves got here (seven miles) in two hours and a half: it sounds slow,

but three miles an hour up hill is very good going, and the syces could hardly keep it up if they did not hang on to the ponies' long tails. Our breakfast here consisted of fowl curry, the fowl for which had not taken to the roof in time, and Robert had seen chased and killed as soon as we arrived.

Naini Tâl, Oct. 17.—We got up here just before sunset, and have got rooms at the Mayo Hotel, opening out of a long wooden verandah on the second floor, very much like a Swiss hotel. We are close to the lake, so that its clear green water seems to come right up to the house, as we look out from our rooms. It is enclosed by steep hills wooded down to the water's edge and reminding us much of Como on a miniature scale; the lake is only one and a half mile long and half a mile broad. Canoes and boats are scudding about, and a little yacht is now going by with its snow-white sails shining in the bright sun. It is curious to think that every boat has been brought up, generally in separate parts, on coolies' shoulders.

Naini Tâl is certainly a lovely place, and so utterly different to the other hill stations. There is nothing here to remind you that you are at a height of 6,000 feet; not a glimpse of the plains, or even of the lower ranges of hills.

We find it very cold, in spite of wearing English winter clothing and having a fire in our room. I am pleased to find how little tired I am with my long ride, for the muscles of the back get sorely tried by riding up a steep ascent for many hours together. You get a little relief by twisting your hand in the pony's mane and hanging on, but it is only an alleviation.

Peóra Bungalow, Oct. 21.—We left Naini Tâl on the 19th, and have been leading a delightfully wandering out-door life since. You may like to hear our marching order: Robert was on our own pony, I on a hired one, the khansáma on another, and our baggage and bedding on the heads of six coolies; besides which I have a dandy in which I go *down* the hills, which rests me much. A pony is hired for two rupees a day, and a coolie for four

annas, or sixpence; so one may have a large retinue without ruining oneself. Our marches have all been about the same length, ten miles, more or less, and are determined by the Dâk bungalows, which are built a day's march apart and are the only shelter travellers can find.

We have been lucky enough always to find a spare room, and with a bright wood fire have spent our evenings very comfortably.

Our first march was to Bhîm Tâl, a pretty little lake with nothing remarkable about it excepting the spiders' webs along its banks, and they are very remarkable. A gap of fifteen feet between two trees was often completely netted across to a height of six feet, with a mass of web several feet in depth. These huge webs are made by a company (limited, I suppose) of spiders, who are to be seen watchfully stationed about them—great fat long-legged fellows quite equal to tackling a dragon-fly or bee. I should like to know how they settle among themselves whose property a fly shall be, for the webs appear to be joint concerns.

Our second day's march, to Ráinghur, was through very fine scenery, wonderfully like the mountains above Mentone. The holm-oaks, too, which cover the hill-sides are so like the olives both in growth and colour of foliage that they increase the resemblance, and at times one almost expected to see the blue Mediterranean in the distance. One saw instead the vast, almost endless sea of dusky forest stretching as far as the eye could reach, only a faint line showing in the far distance where the plains lay.

We made our midday halt on a warm grassy slope, slippery and fragrant with a carpet of fir spines, and ending in a precipitous descent covered with pines and rhododendrons. We lighted a hot flaming fire of bark and fircones, and were only sorry we had no potatoes to roast in the ashes.

Our march to-day has been through far more barren hills, and along the edge of some tremendous khuds, often a sheer naked descent to the stream some hundreds of feet below. Many

of the slopes have been stripped of their trees to provide fuel for some iron works started by Government many years ago and since abandoned. We saw great heaps of iron ore, and were told that it is now all taken to Roorkee to be smelted! three days' march on coolies or cattle. It is wonderful that it should pay to carry it so far in such a way. Perhaps it does not.

Rânikhêt, Oct. 24.—We have just arrived here after a long march of nineteen miles, but along a most perfect road, the cart road between this and Almórah; it is never steep and never narrow, and has a low wall on the side of the precipice to comfort the eye. It runs at a moderately high level and through very beautiful scenery. The scene at this moment before me is the most perfectly beautiful I ever saw: in the foreground are long grassy mountain spurs covered with fine Scotch firs; beyond these stretch out endless ranges of hills, now faintly blue and purple with the evening mists—while beyond them again, cutting the sky line and

shining gloriously in the sunlight, is the great snow range, towering magnificently above all, at a height of from 20,000 to 25,000 feet.

We can see the range for 300 miles, it is said, and as the crow flies are 80 miles from it, yet it looks so clear and spotless that we fancy we could distinguish a man on the white surface.

Yesterday on our way down from Almórah we passed a tea plantation and were shown all over it. We saw the fresh leaves being dried over furnaces, then rolled and picked and sifted. The tea from these Kumaon Hills is delicious, and one soon learns to prefer it to any other.

When tea was first grown here a great many Chinese labourers were imported, and some of them found favour with the daughters of the land and married and settled here. Out of doors a number of children were engaged in husking the pods and separating the seeds for sowing; they were squatted down on their heels in the usual position, and looked extremely like monkeys as they cracked the pods with their little sharp white teeth.

Râmikhet, Oct. 25.—This morning we started at nine to ride up to Chaubattia, a height 1,000 feet above this, where half the 34th Regiment is now quartered. By the cart road it is seven miles, but only four the way we went. The ascent was very steep in places, but through grassy slopes and pine trees the whole way, and views glorious at every step. We had met one of the officers on the march here, and he very kindly had got breakfast ready for us at his quarters—a queer little hut right opposite the virgin snowpeaks of Nanda Dêbi. No human foot has ever yet scaled this mountain, and very probably never will, in spite of a Himalayan Club having been formed for the purpose of climbing whatever can be climbed.

One of our coolies told us how that once a sahib had attempted the ascent of Nanda Dêbi, but the goddess Dêbi had been filled with wrath at his daring to approach so near, and had stricken him with blindness before he was half-way up.

The fact of his becoming blind is no doubt

true, and the hill-people are quite satisfied as to the cause of it.

As we have ridden along I have been amused to see the way these people stack their corn—in trees. The harvest is generally spread out to dry on the housetops, and indeed sometimes stacked there, but usually in a tree. The stacks are never much bigger than large haycocks, and when in the trees look as if they might be gigantic birds' nests. How the grass or corn is stacked in the tall trees, as it sometimes is, passes my understanding.

This afternoon as we were riding through the bazaar we saw two dear shaggy little goats in process of being put in harness for the first time, and we stopped to watch the result. The breaking-in is of the simplest possible description; the fat curly things were lifted up by their coats, their necks put under the yoke of a tiny little cart and there fastened by leathern thongs, the street was cleared, and after a few shoves away went the frightened kids, scampering down the steep rough street with the cart

clattering after them. We were assured they would soon be a capital driving pair, but they protested by piteous bleating against their education.

Naini Tâl, Oct. 28. — We left beautiful Rânikhêt yesterday, and had a longish day's march, some miles up the bed of a torrent which at this season does not require the whole of its bed. The track was very rough and stony, as might be expected, and every few hundred yards crossed the stream, backwards and forwards. But our ponies were very clever and never made a false step, and one comfort was, there were no khuds. Being already in the bed of the stream, we could go no lower.

To-day's march, from Khairna, has been a tremendous pull, uphill nearly the whole way, and through very fine scenery, the mountains clothed with oaks, rhododendrons, ferns, and waving bamboos up to their very crowns. We saw some curious plants of the ginger tribe, and stopped to dig up some roots; each plant consists of a large leaf like a magnified 'Solomon's

Seal,' at the base of which, on the ground, is a large seed-vessel, with thick fleshy leaves of a brilliant scarlet, in between which are bunches of little black and white seeds. This great flaming scarlet artichoke on the ground is very noticeable, but we only met with it on one bank.

Meerut, Oct. 31.—At Naini Tâl we got letters that had been awaiting us some days and told us of dear Carlie's being very unwell, so we hurried home as fast as we could. We had some difficulty in getting to Moradabad, as it was the season for the great exodus from the hills, and all the dâk gháris had been engaged for weeks beforehand; but finally all obstacles were overcome and we reached Meerut the next morning. Happily Carlie's illness was not serious, and he is now quite getting over it and delighted to be in his own house again.

Yesterday I was putting the drawers of my writing-table to rights, and found that one of them would not open, so called the bearer, who with great force pulled it out, when, to my horror, we saw that it had been sealed up with

white ants' mud. We of course feared that the table must be quite spoilt, but, strange to say, they have not damaged it in the least. It is lined with cedar, and I suppose they did not like that, so they merely worked their way up into the second drawer, full, luckily, of only pamphlets and advertisements, and these they ate up almost entirely, after which they appear to have retired, as not an ant was in the drawer. For their wonderful consideration in devouring only price-lists I feel deeply grateful to them.

Three months has, as usual, made a great change in the society here. The Buffs are gone, the Artillery is changed, nearly the whole of the civil staff, the chaplain, and many others. We seem almost strangers in the place.

CHAPTER XXII.

FAIR AT GURMACKTÉSAR—GIVING CHILDREN TO THE GANGES—A COLLECTOR'S DUTIES—YÂKUB KHÁN AT MEERUT—KISMET—DEATH RETURNS—CRUELTY TO TURKEYS—PAYING PUPILS—EURASIAN EDUCATION—GIRLS' SCHOOL—PROFICIENCY OF FIRST CLASS—VISIT TO BENGALI LADY—HEALTH WITHOUT EXERCISE.

Meerut, Nov. 18.—Robert has had a letter from the Lieutenant-Governor, saying that Yákub Khán is to be sent as a prisoner to India, and asking his opinion as to the fitness of Meerut for his place of confinement.

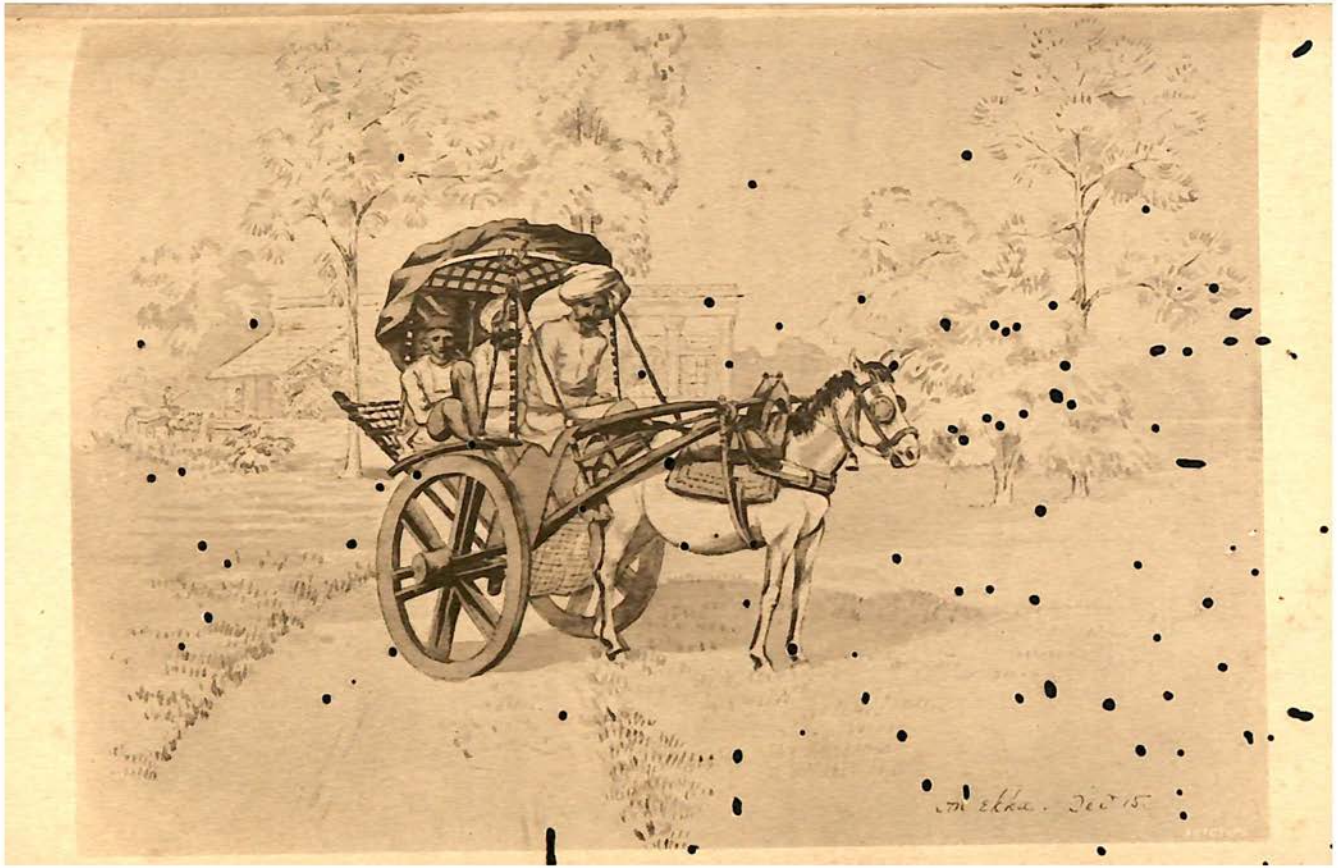
Robert thinks the old Artillery mess-house might easily be made into a suitable residence for him. It is a splendid building, but not enclosed by a wall; however, as the Amír is not to be a 'close prisoner,' I suppose his safe keeping will depend less on bolts and bars than on the number and vigilance of his guards.

Gurmacktésar, Nov. 28.—

Meerut, Dec. 15.—I had got so far on the 28th when the badness of the ink made me send for some fresh ink, and before it came I felt too ill to go on writing, and since then have hardly touched a pen, having been ill with fever and jaundice. My head was so bad that I feared delirium would come on, so we hurried back to Meerut in two long marches, and then I took to my bed, and have been physicked and 'treated' ever since.

We went out into camp on the 23rd, as Robert wished to be present at the great annual fair held at Gurmacktésar, on the Ganges. The road was crowded with people on their way there, on foot, on ponies, on donkeys, or densely packed in bullock-carts or camel-carts, but all in their holiday dress, and forming an endless series of groups to delight an artist, all their gay colours and profuse ornaments harmonised by the brown skins and white turbans and chuddahs.

I felt so sorry to see a whole train of heavily-


Tekka. Dec 15

laden carts turned off the narrow metalled road into the deep sand at the side to make way for our carriage. As we approached Gurmacktésar the road was more and more thronged, so that the mounted orderly could hardly clear a way for us; but for all the crush and throng the people were as quiet and courteous, and cheerful as if there were no crowd. One can hardly guess what an English crowd might be if beer and spirits were unknown. Perhaps they might be as well-behaved and easy to control as these people, even though the Indian gentleness and natural good-breeding would be impossible to them.

I only went one evening to the fair, as the next day I got fever. As we drew near to the place—ourselves moving along noiselessly on the elephant—it was curious to hear the peculiar low yet mighty roar produced by the voices of thousands and thousands of people, unmixed with any sound of hoofs or wheels. The only other time I remember being struck with the same sound was when we stood at the top of St. Mark's campanile, and the vast hum of the

city of Venice floated up to us. It is quite different from the roar of London or any other town, giving one the same impression of countless multitudes, only in a softer, lower tone.

The pilgrims' camp stretched along the flat sandy shore, forming a huge town of little primitive tents and mat shelters. Owing to the terrible mortality this year the attendance was unusually small—not above 40,000 it was thought, whereas it is sometimes as great as 200,000.

A great wide space ran through the centre of the encampment, kept clear as a mall for everyone to walk in, and on either side of this were the booths, very bright and attractive, but with nothing of any value. The sweetmeat-sellers' stalls are always popular, and their cooking is carried on in an ingenious way, over a hot wood fire burning in a hole in the ground, so that your nostrils are refreshed and your eye gratified by seeing your candy frizzling and your cakes browning before your very face.

I much wished to have gone with Robert on

the morning of the great bathing-day, when all the pilgrims bathe solemnly in the holy Ganges —a wonderful sight when you think of the faith that animates the bathers, and will make them brave hardships and even dangers in order to benefit their souls by a plunge in the sacred water.

Robert saw a curious ceremony—the giving of certain children to the Ganges, in fulfilment generally of a vow made either before the child's birth or during some dangerous illness. First, some men walk out into the river as far as they are able, and then others on the bank throw bits of wood to try the range, after which they take hold of the little child, and after a few swings hurl him out into the river. The poor little victim of course goes under, and is dragged out half-drowned by the men stationed there, generally to be thrown in again once or even twice more. Robert interfered to save one little thing of two years old, who had already been thrown in twice and was in a paroxysm of terror. Some were even younger, some a little older. Poor

devoted mites! how glad they must be when their ordeal is over.

Dec. 16.—I have often told you how that a Collector has to do everything—from assessing the rents and collecting the revenue to marrying any couple who require him to do so, or providing bullock carts for any stranger who needs them. But to-day Robert has been called upon to perform quite a novel duty. Late last evening he got a note from a lady here, with whom we have the merest calling acquaintance, to say that her daughter was to be married to-day, and as the gentleman who was to have given her away had disappointed them at the last moment, would Robert be so good as to give her away!

I think it really is lucky he was not as Collector required to marry her, the bridegroom failing at the last moment! What a predicament for a bachelor Collector!

Yákub Khán is safely lodged here, having been heralded by a perfect avalanche of State telegrams. Robert was of course at the station

to meet him, but declined giving him his hand, as Yákub expected him to do. Few Englishmen will take his hand till it is known to be clean from the blood of Cavagnári and his escort. We drove to his residence yesterday to take him a file of the 'Graphic' he had asked for, and I saw him sitting out in the verandah. A rather sad-looking man—and indeed his life has not been too full of happiness.

Robert got a telegram this morning from Lahore to say, 'Numbers of Affgháns going down; all booked for Meerut.' It has been handed over to the police, that they may be on the watch for any attempt to communicate with the prisoners.

Dec. 24.—My poor ayah was taken ill with fever four days ago and died last night. Poor thing! I am so grieved about it. It is the first fatal case among our servants. I hardly know whether fever was the actual cause of death; her head got very bad, and she became apparently unconscious. Her husband would not hear of her going to the hospital, but carried her off in

a litter to his own home, where he sent for a 'magic doctor,' to exorcise the devil with which the natives say she was possessed. Possibly the devil in going out of her killed her. We could not but say how sorry we were she had not been taken to the hospital;—'Oh,' said the bearer, 'when your time has come it makes no difference what is done.'

The Commissioner has just returned from inspecting the Alighur district. He says that no death returns, frightful as they are, give any idea of the extent of the late mortality from fever. The village chokidars, whose duty it is to report deaths, either died themselves or were too ill to know what went on, and in one village alone, where twenty-one deaths were reported, it was found from personal inquiry that in reality more than 200 persons had died. The Commissioner tells us of one family, numbering in all forty-seven souls, of whom forty-five have died this autumn! the only survivors being an old man and a little child.

It is most appalling, and utterly mocks all

efforts to save life; for even were it possible that quinine could be brought to the very door of each family, it would be useless without also sufficient warm clothing, nourishing food, and proper and continued medical treatment.

Dec. 25, 1879.—Christmas Day has again come, marked by the usual 'dális' or offerings of oranges, raisins, Cábul apples, almonds, pomegranates, Cábul grapes packed between layers of cotton in little round boxes, plantains, and other fruit, and toys for the boy—birds and reptiles of shapes and colours unknown to the naturalist, but charming to the baby mind—especially as most of them speak, the cow and the lizard in the same voice.

The grapes and apples I keep for our own eating, but all the rest is given to be divided among the servants. The mound of fruit and sweetmeats was to-day so large that each servant will have got a glorious share.

This morning I wrote to the secretary of the club here on behalf of all the turkeys who will lay down their lives this next fortnight, begging

him to use his influence in saving all those killed at the club from the horrible death to which native custom condemns them. It is hardly credible, but it is a fact, that turkeys in India are killed always by having their tongues pulled out or cut out, thus dying a slow and frightful death. My attention was drawn to it years ago, and I speedily stopped the practice in our own kitchen by giving out that the cook would be fined a shilling for every turkey appearing at table without its throat having been cut. Only once had I occasion to exact the fine, which I did pitilessly, and since that day no turkey has died for us by that horrible death.

Jan. 2, 1880.—The Hussars gave a great dinner party to welcome in the New Year, and we spent a merry evening, in spite of their having just heard officially that their return home is postponed till next November. It is a terrible disappointment to them, and must be almost heartbreaking to the soldiers' wives, who were thinking they had got through their last

hot season—and now to think that all the children have to run the gauntlet of another! Poor things, it is certain that so many more little graves will be made in the cemetery, but mercifully uncertain whose children are fated to fill them.

Jan. 9.—We had a visit the other day from the missionary here, a fat, cheerful German, whose father was missionary here before him. Besides his Christian school, he has a school for heathen boys and girls, and he was telling us that he has just begun to leave off *paying the girls to attend school!* To our English ears it sounds odd, such a reversal of the sense of obligation; but Mr. Hörnle says that a school could not be started at all without at first paying the children to come, and that in his father's time even the boys were paid. This was discontinued years ago, as by that time they had learnt to appreciate the advantages of education; and although the pupils all deserted when first payment was stopped, they soon began to come back, and now even pay small school fees.

Mr. Hörnle hopes, of course, for the same result in the case of the girls, and at any rate thinks the position good enough now to stop paying them for attendance.

The Archdeacon of Calcutta has just been here on a few days' visit, looking as full of *bonhomie* and geniality as ever. He is very full of the necessity of taking some step with regard to the education of the poor English and Eurasian children out here, a very large and rapidly increasing class. There is no doubt that Government will have to move in the matter sooner or later, and the Archdeacon would like to see compulsory education for all nominal Christians of whatever shade of colour.

Many people see a source of danger for the future in this class, belonging as it does by religion and parentage to the governing race, but on a level in ignorance and poverty with the lowest of the natives. Its members have just enough pride of race to prevent their taking to menial labour to earn a living, but not enough to prevent their becoming beggars or

'loafers,' as they are here called, or to prevent them from becoming swindlers and drunkards when they meet with an opportunity.

A European 'loafer' is a byword and a reproach, but as he multiplies and increases he will be a difficult problem to deal with.

Education is no doubt a great benefit; but how far education by itself is a benefit to a large mass of people who will find it hard to turn it to marketable account, is more doubtful. An educated loafer would hardly be an improvement on an uneducated one; and so long as he will not, and perhaps cannot, enter into competition for work with the natives, what is he to find to do? The difficulty is just beginning to force itself into notice, but another twenty years will see it in a very different stage.

There are schools and colleges now for Eurasians, but of too high-class a standing to touch practically the class most in need of education. From one of these colleges a drolly pathetic complaint from some of the boys was sent to the Editor of the 'Pioneer,' setting forth how that

the ferocious temper of one of the Bengali masters was breaking the hearts of the pupils :—

'He never explains anything in the class, and is always full of anger. No one dares to ask him to explain anything. If a boy were to ask him, he treats him as a tiger to his prey. When he is asked to explain anything he makes noise like the report of a pistol and begins to use abusive language, so that the boy, being frightened and ashamed, comes back to his seat and never dares to go to him again.'

Poor boys! Perhaps this dread of asking for an explanation of what they did not understand accounts for the misty comprehension of their subject shown in the following delightful answers given at an Examination a few years ago :—

1. Oliver Cromwell, uncle to Charles the Second, was of a good character and without ambition.

2. The provisions for the Test Act were dogs, cats, and other animals, and lasted forty days.

3. The second great charter of English liberties was the Five Miles Act, by which anybody dangerously ill was not allowed to come within five miles of the King's dominions.

4. In time of war all them that were killed, a cart was

brought and the corpse was put into it. This was the Habeas Corpus Act.

5. The earth being so many thousand times smaller than the sun, it is much easier for the earth to go round the sun than for the sun to go round the earth.

This last boy was evidently a philosopher of the Dundreary school.

Jan. 20.—Last week I went to see the Mission school for girls, managed by Miss Hörnle. There were about twenty-five girls of various ages sitting on the floor up against the wall. The first class was trotted out, and could read and write Hindi, and could do simple addition sums—but it consisted of one girl only. The second class could read and write in a stumbling fashion, and consisted of two girls. The rest were not called on to do anything, excepting two small girls, who said the alphabet and counted very glibly up to a hundred.

I was shown some work they had done, some plain knitting of the 'Strumpfband' order, some appalling Berlin wool work, and a sampler with the Hindi alphabet and numerals. It seems a pity that the beautiful native embroidery

of the Punjáb cannot be encouraged in these schools, instead of our hideously vulgar European wool work.

Miss Hörnle afterwards proposed that I should hear them sing a hymn (translated into Hindustani), and accordingly they all stood up and sang with evident enjoyment. I could not convey to you any idea of the general effect as regards sound. It was *most* like a Dutch chorus, where every singer chooses his own tune, and is required to keep to it, only that I doubt the individual singers having kept to anything that day. I need hardly say that I had not the dimmest notion what the tune was intended to be.

However, they were all greatly pleased (I suppose no one ever enjoys music so much as the performers), and followed up this hymn with a Kindergarten song, in which they imitated their teacher's actions with great animation.

The missionaries make a *sine quâ non* of being allowed to teach the Bible, and Mr. Hörnle says the natives rarely make any objection; they

think it quite right that we should tell them what our belief is, *provided* that we make no attempt at converting them, and on this understanding the teaching is conducted.

At the boys' school there are three hundred pupils, and a proof of Mr. Hörnle's good faith in abstaining from proselytizing is that he himself says he has been here, I think, fourteen years, and has not, to his knowledge, made a single convert. He knows, however, of about twenty former pupils who have in after life become Christians, but not owing to any direct pressure or persuasion. His system is thoroughly to teach the Bible and what we hold to be true, and then leave them to form their own opinions. It is a very honest and very tolerant system, but, as you see, not attended with great results.

I do not suppose that the most intimate acquaintance with the Korán and with the religious tenets of the Mussulmáns would be attended with much danger to our schoolboys in the way of leading them to adopt the Mahom-

medan faith. Any change of faith on a large scale seems, like an epidemic, to require certain conditions of time, or place, or thought; and after the new influence has run its course like wildfire over a certain area, the movement comes to an end, and the faith of the masses again crystallizes and becomes hereditary, until such time as men's minds are again ripe for another religious revolution.

After seeing the school, Miss Hörnle took me to see a private pupil of hers, the wife of a Bengali Bâbu, in Government employ.

We got out from the carriage at a little insignificant door leading into a narrow passage with an earth floor, and then climbed up the narrowest, steepest staircase I have seen since ascending the Vendôme column. This brought us to a wide verandah running round three sides of a court, and here the mistress of the house met us and shook hands with us, saying in Bengali that we were welcome. She was a nice, intelligent-looking young thing, strikingly different from the Hindu women, I was told. She

led us into her sitting-room, furnished, sad to say, exactly like a smart cottage parlour at home, all the furniture of English fashion, and little vulgar English ornaments about the room, with much of the inevitable and never-to-be-sufficiently-detested Berlin wool work, which was proudly brought to my notice.

This Bengali lady is learning the Roman characters, and her great ambition is then to learn English. I asked Miss Hörnle if she had any children, and how long she had been married; but Miss Hörnle said she had never asked her and should not like to do so, as the natives do not like being asked any questions about their domestic affairs. Does this not alone constitute a gulf between the two races, impassable almost to friendship? It shows such a radical difference in the tone of thought.

The native ladies' habits of life quite upset our theories as to the necessity for exercise. This woman, for instance, *never* goes beyond the verandah overlooking the court below. It

would be a shame and disgrace to her even to go down the stairs and open the door. Her whole life is spent as in a prison, yet her health appears to be perfect. Facts do not always bear out theories, certainly.

CHAPTER XXIII.

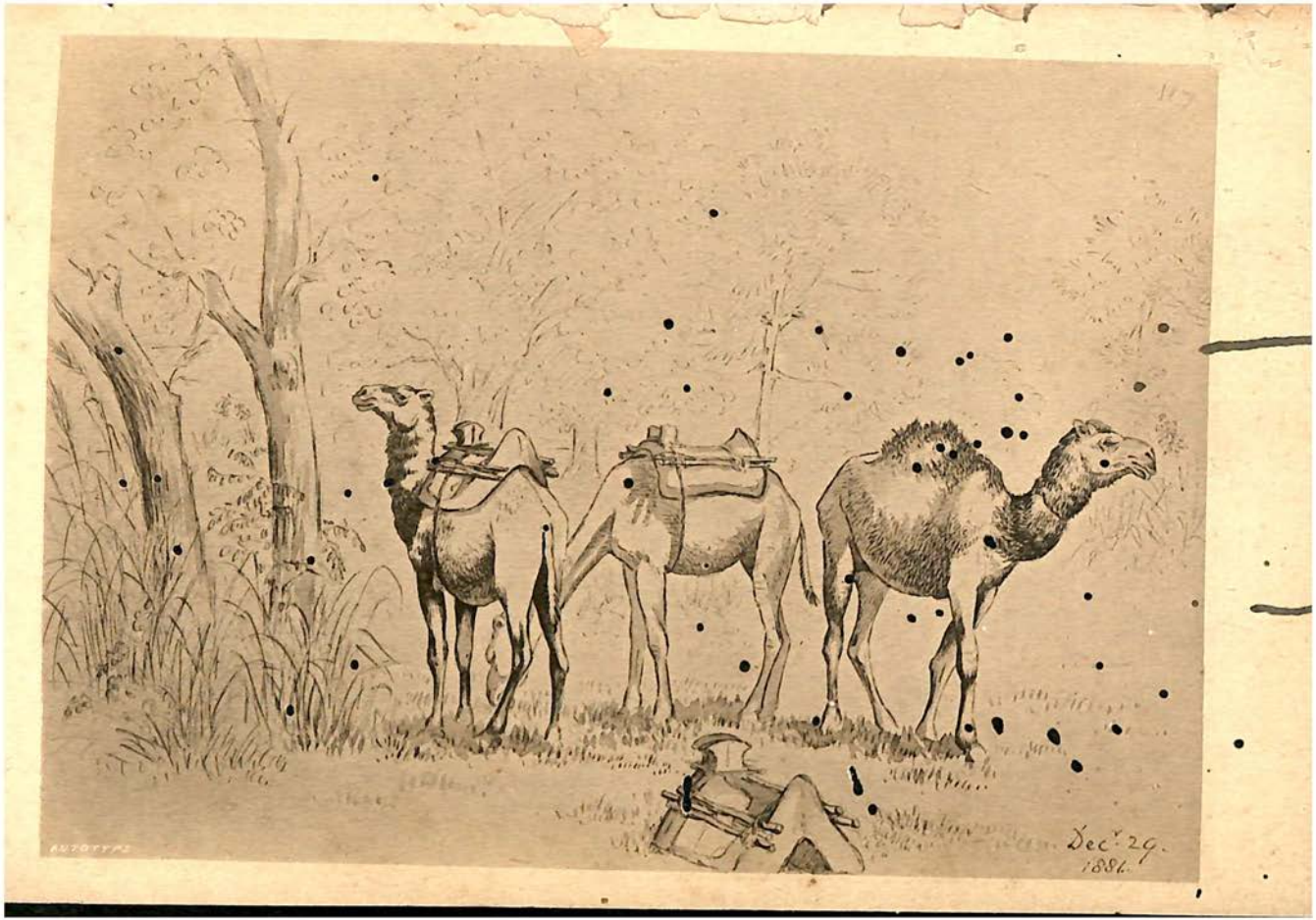
ASH WEDNESDAY AND A SCIENTIFIC FRONTIER—A HAKÎM'S PRESCRIPTION—KÚTAB MINÂR—DESOLATION OF EASTERN RUINS—A FIRST BREAKFAST—HILL SEASON AND PUNKAH SEASON—PACKING FOR LANDOUR—FLOWER SHOW—A WEIGHTY PRIZE-WINNER.

Feb. 11, 1880.—Just returned from church, where, being Ash Wednesday, we all cursed our rulers, whose chief ambition just now is so to remove their neighbours' landmarks as to form a nice scientific frontier. The compilers of our Prayer Book had no prophetic foresight of the necessity for scientific frontiers.

Feb. 17.—After being threatened or tantalized with heavy clouds for the last month, we have at last had a drenching storm, which has put our tennis courts under water and converted every path into a stream. It will do a huge amount of good; but it is 'a good wind that

blows no one any harm.' and for the unfortunate Hussars nothing could have been more unlucky. Colonel Luck took the whole regiment out yesterday for a week's camping, to teach them reconnoitring and so on, and improve the men's nerves and horsemanship with a little pig-sticking between whiles, and they were to bivouac last night about ten miles out—and without any tents. Fancy having chosen the one wet night in the last three months for their expedition! They will not have found the ground *hard*, at any rate.

Robert has been suffering from a bad attack of lumbago. By the doctor's orders, he was dieted and physicked and rubbed, but all to no effect—he got rather worse. Seeing this, the faithful bearer hied him to the city, and there sought counsel of a great Hakîm in whom he places trust, and on his return brought a small packet containing medicine that would, he said, infallibly cure lumbago. Paper after paper he unfolded with anxious gravity, till he disclosed three minute paper balls, much smaller than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ordinary pills. In these was the medicine, and one was to be swallowed every twenty-four hours, *paper and all*: this he laid great stress on. Robert being then in really great pain, resolved to try the Hakim's advice, and swallowed the paper. In a few hours he was decidedly better, and improved steadily from that time, having never since had a return of the bad pain.

I told the doctor of these paper pills, and of the wonderful benefit which Robert had experienced, which piqued him immensely, and he at once pointed out, that, though Robert's recovery after swallowing the heathen bolus was a 'post hoc,' it was by no means 'propter hoc.' Thinks I to myself, what will he say if I remind him of this the next time I feel any better after taking any of his nasty medicines?

Doctors, as a rule, seem to be very illiberal and narrow-minded; they would sooner kill you 'secundum artem' than see you recover by such unprofessional means as bathing in the Jordan.

March 1.—Yesterday we were brought face to face with the memories of—how many? gene-

rations, for we went to see the Kútab Minár near Delhi. Oddly enough, my *first* feeling on seeing it was one of disappointment. I knew that nearly seven hundred years have passed since it was built, and expected to see an air of hoary antiquity over it, especially as most old buildings in India look so very old for their age. But yesterday, when a sharp turn in the road brought us suddenly within the Kútab enclosure, I looked up and saw a building which as regards appearance might have been built last year, so clean and sharp and perfect was all the masonry and carving.

This feeling of disappointment was quicky over, and the view I first had of the monument when standing only twenty feet from its base and looking upwards will be the one most impressed on my memory. It tapers gradually from the very base, and this, combined with the perspective, makes it look from below as though it shot up into the clouds. In reality it is 240 feet high, but its proportions make it look higher.

It was built by Kútab-ud-dín, as a monu-

ment of victory over the heathen king of Delhi, and is built entirely of stones taken from the Hindu temples he in his zeal destroyed. Their columns he preserved, and sanctified by re-arranging them so as to form the cloisters of a Mahommedan mosque close by. In the court of this mosque is an iron pillar twenty-two feet high, of wrought iron with inscriptions on it, and believed to date from the year 300 A.D.

The antiquity of the site as a city is unknown, as its history fades into legend, and each race as it succeeded another seems to have done its best to efface all traces of the former inhabitants. It is now left pretty peaceably to the jackals and the green parrots, which will perhaps do less damage than any of their betters.

We climbed to the top of the monument, stopping long and often on the way. Towards the top the stairs get very narrow, and it would not be pleasant to meet a leopard there, as once happened not many years ago. He was shot, but not killed, and escaped down the stairs again to warn his family against going up the Kútab.

The view from the top is very extensive, but dreary and ugly in the extreme; an endless flat plain, treeless and waterless, hot, stony, barren—the very abomination of desolation—with ruins abounding, and wicked thorn bushes.

At twelve miles' distance you see the river Jumna, and Delhi—the modern Delhi, for the Kútáb is on the site of old Delhi—but too far off to relieve the barrenness of the stony desert.

In no Western country can ruins ever look so utterly dreary and forsaken as here in the East. In Europe the friendly ivy climbs over and seems to clothe and care for them, and trees grow by them and grass. But here their ruin is so uncompromising, and their desertion is so utter;—not a creeper winds itself about them, not a tree will live when those which watered it are gone; the grass is yellow and dry, nothing will grow but thorns,—not thorns like our beautiful English thorns, but thorns with no leaves and only long cruel hooks to catch or tear anything that comes near.

From the Kútab we went to see Humaion's

tomb on the road back to Delhi. It is a fine specimen of the usual type of Mussulmán tombs, built in red stone and white marble and raised on a magnificent basement—a thing in itself showing the grand scale on which the men of those days built. There is nothing, however, to make the tomb especially interesting, except that it was there, in 1857, that the two sons of the king of Delhi were captured and afterwards shot.

The road to Delhi is through a desert of ruins—tombs, temples, forts; some of the domes still brilliant with enamelled tiles of glorious colours, glittering in the sun as if in mockery of the dreary desolation around. Their time will soon come, and then they too will be only a ruinous heap of stones. 'Sic transit gloria mundi.'

Meerut, March 7.—Robert went yesterday to take leave of Yákub Khán, who leaves to-morrow for Mussoorie, where a fine place has been bought for him by Government. His mother is on the way from Cábul to join him, as well as a

small contingent of wives, with whom he will have to get on for the present until Government allows him a few more.

March 14.—Yesterday the bearer brought in a basket full of young goslings, fluffy yellow balls, just promoted from being eggs. It was quite wonderful to see the *aplomb* with which they shook their wings and even plumed themselves, considering that only three hours ago their experience was bounded by an eggshell. We went out to see them have their first breakfast, a very amusing process. A saucer of very liquid meal was brought, and then the mother goose was caught to have a feather pulled from under her wing to act as a spoon. I cried, 'Don't hurt the goose, there are plenty of feathers lying about,' but was solemnly assured that only a feather from the maternal wing would answer the purpose. So one was plucked out, dipped in the meal, and each gosling in turn was caught, had its bill opened and a dose of food slobbered in. They were equal to the occasion and spluttered most of it out, so I do not think it can have hurt them much.

Last week my ayah came to beg of me a loan of money to pay off her debts. Promising to help her if her story was true, I sent the bearer round the bazaar with her to collect her debts, which amounted to thirty rupees, and had chiefly been incurred during the fever epidemic last autumn, when she lost all her four children, poor thing. She is now radiant at being free from her creditors, who are all frightful usurers, often charging more than 50 per cent. on money lent. She is to repay me within five months, which she can easily do, as both she and her husband are in our service. She was as pleased as a child at getting back her jewellery which was in pawn, and now appears in all the dignity of a gold ring in her nose, besides a gold and turquoise stud through her nostril, and a jingling bunch of rings and tassels of silver in her ears! No wonder she is radiant, the conscious possessor of such charms.

Native women are not content with boring one hole in their ear, but bore holes round the entire edge and hang bunches of silver orna-

ments in every hole till the ear is entirely hidden.

March 15.—I find it is a common idea at home that three months in the hills will tide one over the hot season; but the *Punkah* season is really the best definition of the length of one's sojourn in the hills, and may be reckoned from the end of March to the end of October. The first three months are the *dry* hot ones, the next three are the *rainy* hot ones, and then October is the *drying* month, in which people on the plains begin to revive, though they cannot dispense with punkahs till quite the end of the month.

October is the most perfect month in the hills, so no one who can help it comes down till the punkahs have ceased wagging and are laid peacefully by in an outhouse till next March.

The heat has begun early this year, and I shall be very glad to get the boy away to the hills as soon as possible. We hope to start on the 31st for Landour.

March 18.—Robert had a letter yesterday which obliged us to change our plans and decide

on starting on the 25th. In order to have our heavy baggage up at Landour by that time the carts had to start off yesterday evening, so you can fancy the scrimmage there was to get everything packed in one day. Fortunately men are plentiful in India, and we had quite fifteen at work, all active cheerful servants who worked with a will. Stores had to be packed, and wine, crockery, glass, plate, house-linen, books, clothes, a few pieces of furniture, and lastly the piano. To add to all, it was mail day and I was late with my letters, so I bobbed up and down, alternately writing and packing, till at last our home letters were stamped and sent off. These three ounces off my mind were a huge relief, as I was then free to attend to the packing.

By evening all was ready, and we sat out in the moonlight after dinner, resting on our oars and watching the loading of the bullock carts. A great deal of shouting and talking goes to the lifting of heavy boxes, and a newcomer would think some catastrophe had occurred, hearing the Babel of excited voices.

The only perfectly passive spectators were the bullocks and their driver. The latter was not burdened with much clothes and stood by with arms folded, a bronze statue, only remarking, as each box was put on, that his bullocks would certainly die. This, however, was his cue, as he had been impressed for the journey, and his object was to make out that he was quite unfit for it. His bullocks and himself, however, were in fine condition, and the load by no means heavy, so no one paid any sort of attention to his gloomy remarks, and by eleven o'clock both carts were ready and started on as lovely a night as ever Jessica and her lover can have seen.

The heat in the daytime now is tremendous, but the nights have not yet begun to be hot; they are simply exquisite, soft and warm, and laden with the scent of many flowers, and lit by stars shining as they will not shine a month later when the heat-haze spreads its stifling pall over the land.

To-day is the flower show, and as I am

one of the judges I feel glad to be leaving the station so soon afterwards, as we are told that the envy, hatred, and malice caused by the judges' award is very great. There has not been a show here for two years. There have already been dire quarrels among the committee, and a soldier, who was at work in the tents while a quarrel was raging as to the qualification of a certain coleus to be exhibited, remarked, 'By Jingo, if there is all this boiling over a leaf, what will it be when the flowers come!'.

March 19.—The flower show has gone off very peaceably after all, and we had no great difficulty in awarding the prize for the best arranged cut flowers to a basket filled with a most graceful and artistic combination of scarlet, yellow, white and blue. It was in amusing contrast to another bouquet to which the masculine judges awarded their first prize; we begged them to let us guess which was the prize-winner, and going round the table unanimously fixed on one; but no, that was not the prize one. So we tried again, and after fixing unsuccessfully

on three more, we humbly confessed that we could guess no further. The judges' faces fell, and with some shyness they pointed out the arrangement that had seemed to them most commendable. In shape it was like a cauliflower, containing a great quantity of flowers all so tight and neat that they might have been clipped! Our presence of mind was not equal to saying more than 'Oh really!' and one of the judges said—almost apologetically—'You see we like something *solid!*' It was a merit we had not properly weighed.

The show of roses and verbenas was very good, but many of the things had suffered so much from the heat that they had dropped their petals or shrivelled up. Now the show is over, they will be carted off to the hills.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LANDOUR—A FURNISHED HOUSE—THE CHURCH MILITANT—VIEWS ON MARRIAGE—A SWEEPER'S WEDDING—MISS ARCHDEACON'S WEDDING CAKE—ROAD TO RÂJPÚR—MAHOMET'S PARADISE—SIRIUS SNUFFED OUT—DEATHS FROM HEAT IN TRAIN—DAHLIAS—SNAKES IN THE GRASS.

Landour, March 29.—Nothing is more curious than the extraordinary change of climate obtainable in a few hours in India. We left Meerut on Thursday afternoon in blazing heat, and breakfasted next morning at Landour with the thermometer in the shade at 64°, just 40° less than it had been the day before.

We got over the journey very well, the rush not having yet fully set in, and the dawk horses not being therefore fully worn out. At one stage, nevertheless, it was at least half an hour before they could be got to start, in spite of having the wheels turned by men till the

carriage fairly shoved the horses along, and in spite of the reproaches heaped upon them by the driver, 'O sons of pigs! O faithless and perverse ones! O children of faithless parents!' No; nothing had any effect till the whim seized them to start, which they suddenly did at a gallop, the carriage bounding and hopping over the rocky road till it was a wonder the framework held together.

We started for our ride up the hill a little before sunrise, and lovely it was to see the light gradually tinting the mists in the valleys and creeping down the hill sides. It was Good Friday.

The house we have taken is at the extreme end of the narrow rocky ridge on which Landour is perched, and looks southward down, down, down to the scorching plains, and northward over all the intervening ranges to the great snow range. It is built on the verge of a tremendous precipice. We have about five yards of ground beyond the verandah, with a railing round the edge, from which the hill falls in an

almost sheer precipice for nearly 1,000 feet. A very small push, judiciously given, would effectually rid you of an enemy. If air can be pure in this world it must be here, for we seem to be poised in the clouds.

The rent for the season is a thousand rupees; more than we wished to give, but there was little or no choice. The house is nominally 'furnished,' but the furniture is neither plentiful nor sumptuous. It requires both tact and ingenuity to move anything, as it is certain to come apart in unexpected places when lifted. Not a chest of drawers or table is there but has a game leg, which has to be cunningly supported by a piece of rock, plenty of which is fortunately at hand.

However, with curtains and rugs and chintz and nicknacks of our own, the rooms already look comfortable, and the luxury of breathing the fresh bracing air would outweigh many discomforts even did they exist.

No rain has fallen for a month, and there are no ferns yet, and but few flowers, but the

rhododendrons are in splendid bloom and deck the hillside gloriously. They are large trees with rather staggy branches, unlike any English-growing tree I can think of.

It is only three weeks since the last of the snow melted. The winter was a severe one, and snow lay three feet deep here.

To-day is Black Monday for me, as Robert has to return to Meerut till the 13th April, when he gives over charge as Collector and comes up here for a brief week before taking up the Judgeship of Sahâranpúr, which is the railway station for Mussoorie and Landour, and is only forty-five miles distant.

April 5.—I have lately had Spiker, the quondam puppy, to sleep in my room, and the first two nights were enlivened by constant rat hunts, to his intense gratification. The rats, however, do not appreciate the lively interest he takes in them, and last night not a sound was heard suspicious enough to bring him out of his cushioned chair.

Yesterday, being Sunday, I went to the

church up here. It is a purely military one, and it was quite a novelty to have the bag brought round by an officer in full uniform with sword and spurs clanking. Even a beadle in all his glory would have felt eclipsed.

The service was very good, and of military brevity. The chaplain is very 'high,' and looks so nearly like a Romish priest that it seems a pity he does not complete the resemblance by shaving his head.

These hill servants exercise me greatly. This is the first time I have ever known what it is to be a 'lone woman,' and the creatures seem to be perfectly aware of the fact. I have six dandy or jámpán bearers, called Jámpánis, and their duty is, besides carrying my dandy when required, to go into the jungle and cut wood and grass for the use of the house, cow, and ponies. They are supposed to bring in forty pounds of grass apiece, but lately have been bringing in so little that I have had to buy more. Knowing this was not customary, I had their bundles weighed to-day, and found each

man's load to be ten pounds! When these same men bring in wood or grass to *sell*, each man brings eighty pounds, so it is not the *weight* they object to.

I have told the bearer that thirty pounds is the lowest they must bring, and anything short of that must be bought in the bazaar, and the price cut from their pay. They vow they will run away, but I do not think they will. They know it is only what would be insisted upon everywhere.

Landour, April 6.—The bearer has just come from Meerut, and with him the cat, and with the cat the kitten—and the cat has just scratched Spiker's nose for daring to poke it into the dressing-room, which she has appropriated to this precious kitten. And the warlike Spiker, who is equal to killing anything of his own size, retired humbly, knowing her to be privileged, and is now licking his nose pensively, and wondering what his mistress can see to like in a cat.

My Kôkla, too, has come—a green hill-

pigeon, with a strange piping note. He is much ruffled and upset by having passed the night on the bounding mail cart.

It is curious to learn the views of love and marriage that exist among the English servant class, and when a person asks indignantly if servants have not feelings like us, he can only ask it in much ignorance. Feelings, no doubt, they have; but we cannot gauge them truly by our own. As an instance: it is a positive fact that many of the married women in the regiment which left Meerut to go on active service are not only engaged to marry in the event of their husbands dying in Cábul, but are engaged *two and three deep*! Now you have only to try and suppose the possibility of the *officers' wives* doing the same, in order to see if it is true that the lower orders have the same feelings as we have.

My English nurse, who is a widow, amuses me by her unvarnished candour on the subject of marriage. She tells me she has had numbers of offers, and it is from no false sentiment

regarding the dear departed that she remains a widow, but from the difficulty of finding anyone who at his death would leave her such a good pension as the late lamented sergeant did!

Their ideas are eminently practical.

April 10.—There have been some heavy thunderstorms this last week, accompanied by the unceasing roll of thunder which I have never heard except in India. I am not nervous about lightning, but still was unpleasantly alive to the fact that this house, from its position, is extremely liable to be struck. The whole ridge we are on is bristling with lightning conductors, and there is one to this house, but broken and useless. So I sat down amid the deafening thunder, and wrote to the landlord urgently requesting that men might be sent to repair it, and to my relief they are now setting about it. We shall now be better prepared for the next storm in more ways than one, for the thatching is just completed, and will, I hope, keep us watertight. The last storm discovered all the joints in our harness. It was at night,

and my endeavours to sleep through it were put an end to by heavy drops beginning to fall on my face. The first drop murdered sleep effectually, and a few more made me jump up to drag the bed into a dry place.

The evenings are still cool enough to make a fire pleasant, and we have just laid in a ton of firewood—fine logs of rhododendron and holm oak, for which we have paid sixteen shillings.

April 18.—Our garden is a very tiny one, but there are some nice trees in it, acacias—now in bloom—deodars, horse-chestnuts, still with their leaves only half unfurled and cramped like a dead bird's claws, box trees with straight smooth trunks, and some lovely crimson and cream-coloured roses just bursting into flower.

Though the garden is tiny, our estate is a large one, for it goes down the khud on both sides for a long way, and is only spoilt for our use by lying at an inconvenient angle of 70°. It is covered with a thick clothing of flags belonging to the yellow day lily, with here and there a blue iris; while springing up in every cranny

are clumps of dahlias, which will make our hill-side gorgeous in the autumn. Ferns, too, are beginning to show themselves—the bracken with its dear furry brown croziers, and endless others unfamiliar to me.

May 12.—We had a wedding in our compound last week, but a very uninteresting one; among the lowest caste—the sweepers. A native wedding is an affair of many days, and is accompanied by much eating, chiefly at night. My ayah got fever after being out feasting and merrymaking all night, and was grumbling at having had to go, but she explained that a fine of two rupees was exacted from any invited guest who did not attend. It struck me as a most original method of securing a goodly attendance of wedding guests.

Our weather has been unseasonably cool lately, owing to several heavy storms. Yester-evening there was one, when the lightning was so incessant as to produce the effect of a lamp flickering violently, but without going out. For at least half an hour I could plainly dis-

tinguish every object out of doors, and am sorry I did not make the experiment of trying to read by the light of the lightning. I feel sure I could have done so.

May 20.—One of the most apparent results of the war here is the remarkable absence of young men, and the remarkable numbers of 'Cábul widows' as they are called, whose husbands are at the front. Almost the only stray young man who has yet appeared is *attaché* to a young lady who is the heroine of a story by Archibald Forbes, which appeared in some magazine under the title of 'Miss Archdeacon's Wedding-cake.' Miss Archdeacon (says the story, and the main facts are true) was engaged to be married, but broke off the match a few days before the wedding day on account of her *fiancé* illiberally objecting to her appearing at a fancy ball as Ariel. Not knowing what to do with the big wedding-cake, she had it raffled for, and the bridegroom that was to be, taking a ticket, won the cake! He then got up a picnic, at which the bride and her friends helped him to

eat it up. And that is the story of Miss Archdeacon's Wedding-cake.

May 31.—The servants tell me that my next-door neighbour, Colonel ——, has gone out of his mind, which explains the presence of several soldiers I noticed round his house as I returned from my ride. When he first became 'queer,' he called frantically to his servants to come and help pull down the house, and he himself clambered on to the roof and began energetically pulling off the thatch. He then called for matches, and was just proceeding to fire the thatch when the servants thought interference would be justifiable, and sent for help. He now has a guard over him day and night.

There are no shops up here, and therefore if a piece of tape, or some buttons, or a pot of jam is wanted it must be fetched from the bazaar, which is 800 feet below us. The road is a very fair one, from two to four yards wide, and with a stout wooden railing along the edge which so far comforts the eye that no one feels nervous about the khuds. It is very seldom

that an accident occurs here. The worst part of the road is its steepness, which in parts is very great; it has planks imbedded across it at short intervals to prevent it from being washed quite away in heavy rain, and a horse new to the hills is very apt to trip over them, but he soon gets accustomed to them, and so does his rider. Indeed, it is amazing to what a degree familiarity can breed contempt: the road down to Râjpúr has a slope of about a thousand feet in a mile—though that is only the average, and some parts have very much steeper gradients—and it is a favourite bet to make as to what time a man on horseback will do the distance in. The seven miles have been done in some fabulous time—less than thirty minutes, I believe—and if you saw the road you would appreciate the recklessness of the feat. No one deserves to get to the bottom in that time without a broken neck.

My last addition to the household is a pair of half-fledged parrots brought me by a hill man. They are all head and beak, and I find it very

difficult to get food down their throats by reason of their curved beak.

June 19.—The climate here is most beautiful, the air clear and bracing, and never above 74° in the house—while from my window, as I write, I can look down to the cruel plains where the heat is daily killing its victims. It reminds me of Mahomet's description of Paradise, where, in order to enhance the happiness of the blessed, they are placed in sight of the torments of the damned.

The heat on the plains lately has been awful: on one day an engine driver and two guards in the Punjáb died from it; so you may suppose it has been more than merely unpleasant.

The nights here are exquisite, and the sky seems to have more stars than ever. The other night I was sitting out watching them, when nurse came out too, and we began talking. Her ideas are somewhat elementary, and she was genuinely surprised to hear that the stars were always shining in the sky, even at noonday. 'Well, to be sure, I never heard that before! I

thought they always came out every night!' Her belief may be a common one among her class, but it tickled me to think of great Sirius melting, vanishing, being snuffed out every morning, and only lighting up again when it was time to make the sky pretty for us earth-worms! It is so very droll.

July 20.—Our climate since last I wrote may be described as one of incessant rain, tempered by dense mists. We have had sixty inches of rain, and are damp exceedingly. Our thatched roof has let in quite a minimum of rain; but some of our friends who live in the flat-roofed houses have been nearly drowned out, and have had a very lively time of it, at night especially, trying to save their carpets and furniture from the deluge.

Yesterday was our first fine day for a fortnight, and all Landour turned out its boots and bedding, blankets and books, on to the terraces and railings that they might 'eat some sun,' and lose some of the all-pervading fustiness common to all things just now.

The rain has driven all living things to seek shelter, and only last evening two fine black scorpions with tails erect were slain in the house. My parrots have been a great amusement and interest to me, and are the pride and admiration of the servants and people about. They roost down in the valley among the deodar trees, but at sunrise come into the verandah and call loudly for their breakfast. They will sit on my shoulder, or swing on my chatelaine as long as I will let them, then both swoop off with a wild shriek and fly away into mid-space, whirling and wheeling round and round at a pace that almost defies the eye to follow—and then always end by alighting on a tree or railing close by, looking as meek and demure as though they had never stirred.

Aug. 2.—News has come of a great disaster having befallen General Burrows's brigade near Kandahar, and the excitement and anxiety felt is terrible. Hardly a man or a woman is here but is personally affected in some way by the dreadful news. Wives who have been

counting each day as bringing their husbands' regiment a day's march nearer to them, now fear that at the best their return will be delayed. Mothers are trembling to hear the fate of the numbers of officers of whom nothing is yet known. In one case a mother we know has heard the worst—that her son, her only child, has been killed.

The 15th Hussars have again been ordered to the front, and yesterday after church there was a parade of all their men who are up here, to see how many are fit for active service.

Aug. 18.—We hear that the Hussars have reached the frontier after a very trying railway journey, in which they lost six men and five horses from heat apoplexy. Their trials were by no means over either, as they will yet suffer much before reaching Quetta. Poor fellows! those who are dead were only a month ago full of the thoughts of spending Christmas in England.

Up here the climate is perfect as regards temperature, but we shall be glad when the

rains are over. Sometimes for days we live in the clouds, and can see nothing of the world stretched below us except an occasional dream-like glimpse seen through a momentary rift in the ever-rolling thick fleecy mist. Numbers of wild flowers have sprung into existence, and mauve and white orchises bloom on every bank. But the dahlias are the glory of the place. I do not think there can be a finer wild flower than your dahlia, both on account of the splendid variety of its colours, the dense masses in which it grows, and the length of time during which it is in bloom—from July to October. The khud below this house is simply an unbroken sea of dahlias—crimson, white, scarlet, yellow, pink, purple, orange, and a deep, almost black, maroon.

I did not know that there were snakes up here, but on Saturday last a coolie was bitten by one close by, and though taken immediately to the hospital died, poor fellow, on Monday after great suffering. A cow, too, belonging to a friend of ours dropped dead just as it was

going to be milked, and they found it had been bitten by a snake on the lip while it was grazing. I am having all the weeds and grass cut down all round us, so that no cover may be left.

CHAPTER XXV.

A BABY FAWN—A FACILE CONVERT—THE CENSUS—ALARM FELT—FORTY HOURS' RAIN—THE NAINI TÂL LANDSLIP—DEHRA—RIDING ON MANTEL-SHELVES—DEATH OF A MAN-EATER—RAINFALL AT BIJNOUR—GREAT DESTRUCTION BY FLOODS—NATIVE ASTRONOMY—TWELVE SUN-BROTHERS—TRIP TO CHAKRÂTA—A BROKEN BRIDGE—A TIGERISH NEIGHBOURHOOD—RIDE UP TO DÊOBAN—RETURN TO LANDOUR.

Sept. 6, 1880.—A telegram has been received saying that General Roberts has had a battle with Ayoub Khán and defeated him with great loss. This, so far, is well, but days may elapse before we hear any details, and the suspense to those personally interested is most trying. I often wish there were no such things as telegrams. Think how much more exciting news must have been in olden days—when brought by an express who had ridden day and night, and

arrived dusty and worn—with the full news all at once! Nowadays, by the time we get the full particulars the original news is so old, and has been succeeded by so many fresh accounts, that we hardly care to wade through such antiquated details.

This last week I have added a new pet to my family—a baby fawn belonging to the gural, or Himalayan chamois. At first I had great difficulty in spoon-feeding it, but now it laps up milk readily, and looks upon me entirely as its mother. It is a pretty thing, just fourteen inches high, and has a blue ribbon strung with little bells round its neck. The black kitten has also a ribbon and bells, and is a devoted playmate of the fawn's. They and the boy and Spiker always go about with me, and have races with one another.

My dear old black cat was carried off on Sunday night by a leopard or hyena that has lately been often prowling about the house. There are several of them about, and they frequently carry off dogs or poultry.

Sept. 17.—A few days ago my ayah came to me and informed me that she was going to turn Mahommedan. She belongs to the Sweeper caste, whose religion is vague, I fancy, as they are repudiated as co-religionists both by Mahommedans and Hindus, not being considered respectable enough to have any recognised faith. The immediate cause of her change of faith is that the Sweeper caste here bully and harass her and her family, exacting fines on various pretences, and so on. So she would turn Mahommedan. I asked her how she was able to alter her belief so conveniently. She told me there was no alteration required, save as to the washing of pots and pans, the abstaining from eating food cooked by Christians, and a few other such matters; that the Hindus and Mahommedans equally believed in God, and it was the same God, as there was only one—the one who 'caused her to be born'—and that it mattered not whether He was called Khuda or Allah.

I saw she was profoundly ignorant of any religious tenets save this. But possibly in her

ignorance she may have said words that are not foolish :—'There is one God only, by whatever name He is worshipped.'

There was a curious instance to-day of how easy it is to alarm and impose upon very ignorant people. Government is taking a census of the population of the hill stations, and the paper was to be filled up to-day. Yesterday afternoon the servants informed me that news had come of a great earthquake that was to take place that night, and when they had asked a native clerk why the census was to be taken, he told them it was in order to know how many people were killed by the earthquake ! They were in a violent state of alarm all the evening, but, finding on waking this morning that they are not all dead men, are quieting down again.

The rainy season is nearly over, but Jupiter Pluvius is making one tremendous struggle for the sceptre that is passing away from him. Yesterday it began to rain hard, and many times as I woke in the night I heard the steady splash of heavy rain and the howling of the wind. This

morning it was still raining as though it had never rained before—in a thick white sheet; and up to this moment, nearly bedtime as I write, it has never ceased and never slackened, and looks likely to go on all night again.

Saturday, Sept. 18.—After a terrific night, day dawned on a downpour as heavy as ever, and not till twelve o'clock did the rain cease, after pouring unceasingly for thirty-nine hours. We shall be curious to hear how many inches have fallen, and with what results. I remember once in Oudh thirteen inches falling in twelve hours, when most of our servants' houses and many hundreds in the native city collapsed, and the floods were most disastrous.

Dehra, Thursday, Sept. 23.—We have just heard the awful news of a great catastrophe at Naini Tâl. A huge landslip took place on Saturday—sweeping the assembly rooms and library into the lake, and burying a hotel and some other houses in its descent. About forty English men and women are known to be killed, while the loss of native life will perhaps never be accu-

rately known, but must probably be treble that of the English. And that was the morning after the census! The rain had been falling steadily for forty hours, and fears seem to have been entertained as to the safety of the hill; and when, early on Saturday, a small landslip occurred, burying the servants' houses belonging to the hotel, the visitors took alarm and all left—otherwise the loss of life when the great slip occurred would have been still more frightful. A fatigue party of English soldiers under some officers were at work clearing away the ruins caused by the small slip and getting out the dead and dying natives, when suddenly—at half-past one—a dreadful shout was heard, that the hill above was giving way—and in a few seconds half the hill-side came down, burying the working party and all that lay between it and the lake. The mass of earth and rock falling into the lake made its waters rise so suddenly that a gigantic wave went rolling down to the lower end, where it washed away some forty natives who were standing near the dam. The suddenness and

absoluteness of the catastrophe make it most tragic.

I am writing from Dehra, where Robert is holding a week's sessions, and I came down on Tuesday to spend the week with him. There was great difficulty in procuring coolies to carry our things down the hill, as the census had so thoroughly terrified them that they had all fled to their villages, far in the hills, thinking, like all ignorant creatures, that anything mysterious and incomprehensible boded evil to them in some way.

We left Landour at sunrise, and had a lovely morning for our ride down ; but the sun was so hot before we got down that, in spite of my pith hat and lined umbrella, I got a bad headache.

From Râjpúr, at the foot of the hill, we drove the six miles here in a carriage, and after being six months without a drive I found it most enjoyable. The road is very pretty, and so is all the scenery round here ; beautiful forest trees shading the road, and great clumps of tall waving bamboos, thick hedges of roses, and

many beautiful flowers which I am delighted to see again.

Just now the place is a terrible jungle, but the vegetation is so rapid in the rains that it is simply hopeless to struggle with it; people are now beginning to cut down the five-foot growth of grass and weeds which is choking their ground, and in a month's time the gardens will be trim and tidy. The bungalows are scattered over a very large area, each one standing in its own grounds—pretty one-storied houses, with thatched roofs of many gables, and a wide, cool verandah running all round covered with luxuriant creepers of many kinds.

There is a tolerably large white population, many retired officers and pensioners having settled here. The Viceroy's bodyguard, too, has its head-quarters here, and part of a Ghoorka regiment is here; besides which it is a great place for racing men to keep their studs.

Coming from the hills, it is an absolute pleasure to be on flat ground again, and to feel that you are not *always* within six feet of a khud

more or less precipitous. To ride always on a mantel-shelf, even on a smooth and broad one, is a kind of strain, though one is hardly aware of it at the time. A sad accident happened last Saturday to one of the Mussoorie volunteers. He was returning from drill late in the evening, when a storm came on with vivid lightning. He never reached home, and in the morning his dead body was found down a khud; he had evidently been confused by the alternate darkness and dazzling flashes, and had gone over the edge, falling ninety feet. He left a wife, poor fellow, and eight children.

The weather here is exquisite, though I felt the heat greatly at first. The thermometer is 82° in the shade. The ponies, too, feel the heat greatly, and are in a perfect lather after a gentle ride of three or four miles; it is the extreme suddenness of the change that makes it trying.

Dehra, Sept. 24.—We took a charming drive yesterday evening, along winding lanes that might have been in Devonshire, narrow and

shady, between straggling hedges and deep banks quivering with ferns.' Much of the way was through tea plantations, monotonously neat, the bushes being kept small and closely clipped. The tea made here in the Doon (as this enclosed plain at the foot of the hills is called) is of a good kind, and sells at high prices. Just now is the slack season, and nothing is being done in the plantations but weeding.

Water is supplied by an aqueduct brought from the hills, in which it rushes and races along at a headlong speed, every hundred yards or so tumbling down a fall of many feet into a basin of a lower level, where it churns itself into foam and then rushes out more furiously than before. Little native children are certainly common and plentiful—but I should have thought this aqueduct, with its rushing water on the road level, would have done something towards thinning them. It made me shudder to look at the foaming eddying pools, and think of the fate of a little child playing by the edge and tumbling in.

Dehra, Sept. 25.—Last night the magistrate

here was dining with us, and said that on his way he had nearly driven over a leopard that was lying in the road close to his house. He has often heard it prowling and sniffing about, and now intends sitting up at night to try and shoot it.

At Chakrâta, the next hill station to Mussoorie, there is joy over the death of a celebrated man-eating tiger, which had a price of 50*l.* set on its head. It has killed fifty persons within the last three years, and only two nights before it was shot it appeared at the Forest Officer's bungalow at Dêoban and killed two natives who were talking together in the garden at dusk. The remains of one of the poor creatures were found in the tiger's body.

As we intend spending a few days next month at that very bungalow, I feel relieved to think the man-eater's career is over. A moonlight stroll loses its charms when a possible tiger is crouching in the bushes.

Landour, Sept. 27.—Just now I was startled by hearing wild sobs and shrieks proceeding from my dandy-bearers' quarters, and on send-

ing to make inquiries find that a messenger has just arrived from the village of two of the men, brothers, bringing the dreadful news that their house came down in that heavy rain, and that their mother, their two wives, and two children have been killed. Poor fellows! they are nearly crazy. I have given them a fortnight's leave of absence, and they start at once, but their home is six days' journey from here.

Accounts are pouring in of the destruction wrought by that three days' rain, and we hear of landslips, floods, falling houses, and broken bridges in all directions. At Bijnour, near Moradabad, thirty-two inches of rain fell in twenty-four hours, besides eight inches on the day before. The damage done has been something enormous, both to life and property. Had the same rain been distributed over months, how invaluable it would have been! It is like keeping a man without water till he is nearly dead, and then forcing him to drink three gallons at once. The natives are saying that what the drought spared the floods have destroyed—'but it is God's will,' they always add.

Oct. 1.—This evening I was coming home late in my dandy, and, being a lovely starlight night, I asked the dandy-wallas if they knew any of the stars. Venus was just rising, and they said that was 'Sukkar,' and that he would not let any more rain fall. I reminded them that he was looking over the mountain when that fearful three days' rain fell. 'Yes,' they said, 'when first he comes there is heavy rain, but after that he puts a stop to it. The planet in the west is his brother, and one of them is always in attendance on the sun, not always the same, but turn and turn about.'

They say there are twelve suns, brothers, who each shine for a month. I asked how they knew the suns were not the same, as they looked so much alike; they said it was easy to know they were not the same, some are the elder brothers, and much stronger than the others—so strong that they can kill men. But this month we have a young sun-brother—and next month a still younger one—and then the two youngest, who are so weak that they can hardly even melt the

snow. I asked them what became of the sun-brothers who were off duty; they said they supposed they were at their own home, but did not know where that might be.

As to the fixed stars, they did not have any great opinion of them; they said their names were all written in the Brahmin's books, and some were bigger, some smaller: just like the Sahibs, who were some generals, some judges, others captains, and 'small sahibs,'—and who could remember their names?

Nágtát Bungalow, Oct. 20.—Robert came up to Landour on the 3rd, for the Judges' Vacation, and we have been enjoying our holiday as much as two schoolboys. Nearly every day we have gone for some long ride, taking our luncheon with us, and picnicing in some pretty place; one day on the very top of the Camel's Back, a sharp ridge above Mussoorie, from which you get a bird's-eye view of the whole station; another day 3,000 feet lower, from which we looked up and saw Mussoorie full face, which

we decided to be a very unbecoming view, having no perspective at all.

We are now on the road to Chakrâta, having started on a longer expedition, to last eight or ten days probably, though it was nearly brought to an untimely end yesterday by an accident that even now makes me shudder to think of. At a sudden bend in the road I, who was riding first, came to a broken bridge, of which so narrow a bit was left that my nerve failed me, and, stopping short, Robert passed me and proceeded to cross. He was nearly over when the earth quaked, and the next thing I saw was the pony's legs struggling in space, his body athwart one of the beams that had not given way. I screamed to Robert to try and get off, fearing every moment that the pony would begin struggling and make it impossible for him to free himself. He managed to scramble up over the pony's head, and got safely on to the bank; not a moment too soon, for the pony began struggling furiously, and soon toppled over, falling on its back on the steep bank of the little ravine.

We dreaded lest another struggle would send him down among the boulders in the stream, when he must have been killed ; but he seemed too terrified and exhausted to move, and lay still until the two syces managed to get hold of his bridle and encourage him, when with a wonderful struggle he recovered his feet, and scrambled up on to the path, where he stood with heaving flanks and trembling nostrils, but with no hurt beyond some bumps and bruises. It had been an anxious two minutes, and if my nerve had not failed me, and *I* had tried to cross the bridge, the result could not have been so fortunate, for I could not possibly have freed myself from the pony in time, and we must have both rolled into the stream below.

The road has been much damaged by the rains, as indeed it is every year, and the repairs have not yet been made. In many places the road had partially slipped, leaving only two feet for riding on ; and in one place a small landslip from above had completely effaced the road, and we had to climb up and then down by a narrow

path worn by foot passengers ; but we had the ponies led over, as you may suppose.

Last night we slept at the Lakwár bungalow, where we spent the night two years ago in a tent. The village is very picturesque, and this morning before starting I took a sketch of its temple, which is almost Chinese in appearance, with three tiers of roof slated with rough split slabs of rock, and decorated with a fringe of carved wood round the eaves.

To-day's march has been an easy one, as, instead of going through the twenty-three miles from Lakwár to Chakrâta as everybody does, we have made a short two hours' march to this little bungalow of Nágtát, built for the use of the road engineer. We were told that it was very barely furnished, but that we should find all that was positively necessary for spending a night there; so, full of faith, we arrived towards sunset, having made a long and luxurious halt for luncheon on the way.

The furniture consists of a table, item five chairs, item two bedsteads. To our dismay, not

a cooking vessel of any sort, no water, and nothing to bring any in, and the nearest village down in the valley. So two of our men have gone on a descent of exploration, to see if haply they can borrow a water-pot of some kind. The only washing apparatus is an old tin tub with a great split in it; but this I have had plastered up with mud, so we hope it may hold water, or at least leak slowly.

By good luck we had two candles with us, and Robert is sitting by the fire (for we met a villager with some wood which he sold to us), reading his book by the light of one candle held in his hand, while I am writing by the other, which is in proud possession of our only candlestick. But I must put it out, for we must not waste our resources so lavishly.

Chakrâta, Oct. 22.—Our march yesterday was an easy and uneventful one of nearly five hours, along a road carried at a high level, about 7,000 feet, and singularly free from great ups and downs. Part of the way lay through very pretty scenery, where it ran along the northern

slopes, which are clothed with ferns and mosses and timbered with magnificent old rhododendrons and oaks.

Within a few miles of this place we came again on to the southern side of the hill, where the khuds are horribly deep and precipitous, and the road or ledge unusually narrow and rocky. I have not the nerve to allow my pony to walk along the extreme outer edge, as he would prefer; but here and there it was unavoidable, and I saw my feet projecting quite over the edge of a precipitous descent rolling smoothly down a couple of thousand feet. I held my umbrella so as to keep out the sight as much as possible, for I do not enjoy these bold and eagle-like positions.

Spiker was untiring in exploring the slopes wherever practicable, and was wild with excitement on spying a troop of monkeys. The khud was so smooth and steep that he would almost certainly have broken his neck in going after them, but we had the greatest difficulty in keeping him back.

The Dâk bungalow here is most inconveniently placed, being a long way from the post-office, and everything. We had looked forward to being in clover here, and getting bread and eggs, things we have not seen since leaving Landour. However, nothing was to be had last night, but this morning we have managed to get *one loaf*, a perfect prize !

We took some luncheon with us, and rode out to see something of Chakrâta, which is one of the largest military sanitariums in the hills. There is a splendid cart road between it and the plains ; a great broad, smooth road, never steep, and with a low stone wall on the side of the khud. We rode along it to the far end of the station, where, as a *cart* road, it ceases, and then went along the road to Simla, which is an ordinary hill road, five or six feet wide, and indifferently kept. The scenery was beautiful ; steep rolling grassy slopes covered with huge grey rocks and fine trees, with great perpendicular crags jutting out here and there, casting a deep black shadow on the hillside. We pic-

niced in a lovely nook among the grey rocks, spreading our rugs over the long warm grass and bracken, while close by were holly-trees bright with berries, and other trees clad gorgeously in the scarlet festoons of the Virginian creeper which had overrun them.

We were reluctantly thinking of starting home again, when to our surprise we saw a party of soldiers with rifles coming along the path, and with them an officer whom on nearer approach we recognised as having known at Meerut. He gave us the rather startling news that they were out after a tiger which was supposed to be somewhere close by our luncheon place, but it was too late to do anything more to-day. It seems that one of the men was out this morning after pheasants, when suddenly, to his speechless horror, he nearly stumbled over a large tiger lying on the bank overlooking the road, in wait doubtless for some unlucky coolie, as two man-eating tigers are still known to be in the neighbourhood, and Government has offered a reward of 50*l.* for each of them.

Tommy Atkins was nearly paralysed with terror, but had just enough wits left to turn and fly, and fled back with the news to the station. When the shooting party reached the place, the tiger had vanished, but they tracked his fresh footprints across the road and down the ravine just in front of us. They now expect to hear of a 'kill' to-morrow morning, and are full of hope of bagging the monster.

We were taken to see the cairn erected on the spot where three weeks ago the celebrated man-eater was killed, not fifty yards from where we had so peacefully eaten our luncheon! I never was in so tigerish a neighbourhood before, and for all we know the tiger may have been crouching on the bank this morning, and watched us pass within almost paw's reach of him. But we should not have run much risk even were it so, for tigers are great respecters of persons, and never eat any people but of the humblest castes.

Lakwár, Oct. 25.—Nothing more was heard of the tiger while we were at Chakrâta, as he

killed neither man nor beast those two days, and without a 'kill' to show his whereabouts a thousand men might search the hills for him in vain. Trackers are on the watch for him, and Chakrâta still hopes to have the honour of despatching him.

On Saturday we rode up to Dêoban, a hill 10,000 feet high, but an easy three-mile ride from Chakrâta. We had heard so much of the badness of the khuds and the road that we were agreeably disappointed; the path is certainly very narrow and the khuds almost sheer in some places, but not as trying to the nerves as many along the road to Mussoorie. The north side of the hill is covered with a forest of beautiful tall fir trees, with an undergrowth of the pretty hill-bamboo, and quantities of the cotoneaster clinging to the grey rocks, and covered with red berries. The rocks there are most picturesque, jutting up abruptly to a great height and of a beautiful silver-grey colour, making a lovely contrast to the intense dark masses of fir-trees. The character of the rock

differs greatly in these hills, and must be full of interest to a geologist; on Dêoban it is a sound slaty-looking rock with veins of quartz running like a network through it. In some of the hills the rock looks as though it had been crushed up by some inconceivable force which has actually smashed it into almost powder; and in these hills slips are constantly occurring, as the rock has no substance or strength.

On Sunday we went to morning service at the military chapel. The congregation was a very small one, as nearly all the men have now gone down, and few except invalids are left. It must be dreary work in the winter for the three or four officers left in charge of the station. Snow falls heavily and the cold is said to be intense. Even now we found the air much sharper than at Landour, and our servants complained greatly of the cold at night. They are delighted to be on the way back, and to-day when we came in sight of Landour (still a day's march distant) they were loud in their exclamations of pleasure.

Landour, Oct. 30.—Our return journey was unmarked by any adventures. It was very enjoyable picnicing every day in some new spot. The order of the day was usually to start at eight o'clock and march till twelve. This got us over twelve miles of ground, for three miles an hour is a very good walking pace in the hills we find, and it was of no use for us to outstrip our servants, as without them we should be badly off when we halted.

From twelve to three o'clock we made our halt, for breakfast and a rest. The wind was very cold the last two days, and we lit a fire and boiled our miniature kettle, and drank hot claret and made toast to eat with our *pâté de foie gras;* after which luxurious breakfast we spread our rugs and read or sketched, while the sound of the hubble-bubble and the crunching of grain told us that the servants and ponies were also enjoying their halt.

By three o'clock the sun had lost its greatest power, and we had a pleasant two hours' march to end with. The road down to the Jumna is

fringed with most beautiful grasses, several feet high, but exquisitely delicate and feathery. The great Bauhinia Vahlii creeper grows near the Jumna, and attracted my notice by its huge leaves and its peculiarly large bold tendrils, of a furry brown, and looking almost like little horns ; I snatched one and stuck it in my hat, but it was soon jerked out by an overhanging branch. It is a gigantic creeper, growing to the size of a man's leg, and twining to the tops of the tallest trees, which it strangles in time, with the ingratitude of a base nature. On reaching home we found all well, and the fawn grown much stronger and heavier. Our hill life is now nearly over, as we go down to Sahâranpúr next week.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SAHÂRANPÚR—A RUNAWAY—THE THREE GREAT NECESSARIES—LORD RIPON'S VISIT—KASHMIR'S INJURED DIGNITY—TALL GRASS—HEAT AT SIBI—UNRECORDED SUFFERINGS—AN INDIAN BREAKFAST—DR. AITCHISON'S HERBARIUM—TRIP TO AMRITSAR—GOLDEN TEMPLE—FLYING FOXES—PHÛLKÂRIS—FAKIRS TAKING VOWS—MY BLACK HANDS—BUTCHERS' SHOPS—ONE-EYED MEN—MAN CARTS—CARPET MANUFACTORY.

Sahâranpúr, Nov. 5.—We left Landour on Wednesday, after having packed and sent off fifty coolie loads of heavy baggage on the previous day. Carlie, the fawn, and I went down in a jâmpán, Robert on his pony, the ayah with the kitten in a dandy, and the other servants on foot. On the way down we overtook our cow, who was lying down and refused to get up. As she was only to go to Râjpúr that day, we told the cowman not to hurry her, but let her lie down an hour or two. Her day's

journey was only eight miles altogether, but the roughness and steepness of the descent made it fatiguing to her.

At Râjpúr we found a Dâk ghâri waiting for us, an oblong box on wheels, with venetian shutters round it, but no glass. Into this machine Robert and I, Carlie and the fawn, got, and abandoned ourselves to seven hours' rattling and shaking. The fawn was most good and patient, but he could not obliterate himself, nor help occupying space we should have liked for our legs.

The birdcages were hung on behind, and just as we were dashing down the Mohan Pass the syce behind called to us to look round, and lo! there was the parrot sitting outside at the top of her cage! Why she did not fly away is a wonder, as she had never been in a cage till that day, and flies like a hawk. However, she came at once on to my hand and let me restore her to the cage, over which we tied a pillow-case to make it safe. It was made of *tin*, and the violent jolts had dislocated several bars.

When within five miles of Sahâranpúr we found our carriage waiting for us, and were delighted to exchange the rattling and cramping of the ghári for the comfort of a barouche. It was, however, nearly the cause of a catastrophe, for the horses had been waiting for us some time and were impatient. Two syces were at their heads, but the coachman, foolishly, had got off the box to let down the steps for us; Robert and I had just taken our seats, when with a sudden rush the horses bolted. The syces clung on pluckily at the risk of being dragged down; but they could not have held on long, for in an instant more the horses would have been in full gallop, had not Robert leaped out, overtaken them, and seized the bit of the off horse. It was a most determined bolt, and but for Robert's quickness and decision nothing could have saved me. It was all over so quickly that it was only afterwards that one fully realised the danger.

When the horses had quieted down a little, we set off once more, and finally reached our

house in safety, though nearly coming to grief once by a collision with some bullock carts, which, as usual, had at the last moment got out of our way by going to the wrong side.

Nov. 10.—This is a huge rambling house, and has lately been tenanted by a community of railway clerks and their families, and as they all kept little stores of flour and sugar, the rats and mice literally swarmed in the place. The bearer declares that nearly 500 were killed the first week; but this quantity requires to be taken with a grain of salt—the bearer being rather given to colouring highly. No doubt an immense number were killed, for even since our arrival we have caught a good many, by dog, cat, and trap.

It is now of course the cold season, but is so much hotter than it ever was at Landour—going up to 75° every day indoors—that we have all felt more or less upset by it and reminded that we have livers.

Besides the matting we brought with us from Meerut we have laid down 4,500 feet of new

matting—but luckily this palm-leaf matting is very cheap, one rupee only for a hundred square feet. It does not last long where there is much traffic, but is fresh and clean to look at and can easily be renewed. Matting and Turkey red are the two great standbyes of Anglo-Indians who wish to make their house look cheerful and nice without much outlay, not knowing where they may be six months hence. With them you can soon make a bare house look bright and habitable. And whitewash! I was ungrateful to forget that primary and almost annual necessity. How many thousand yards of that are to be seen in every Indian bungalow!

On Monday the Viceroy came here to inspect the Botanical Gardens and the Remount Depôt. He stayed the night at the Collector's, and we dined there in the evening to meet him; he is most amiable and courteous, and shows far more interest and pleasure in the country and its novel sights than most men do. The *nil admirari* school, which has so many disciples, is evidently one with which he has no sympathy.

He has just returned from a tiger-hunting expedition, and spoke with genuine enthusiasm of the excitement of bagging his first tiger, and of the novelty of shooting from an elephant—the beauty of the forest scenery, and all the new and picturesque experiences of an Indian shooting party.

From here Lord Ripon goes to Lahore to hold a durbar. The Maharája of Kashmir will be present, but he is sulky because the number of his followers has been limited to a shabby 1,500! Truly men are but children of a larger growth.

Nov. 15.—Our compound is a large one, over twenty acres, with a good garden in it and some fine trees, but it has been much neglected of late years and is a terrible jungle. You have often read of jungles where the grass was so tall that the elephants were hidden in it, and the sketch I send—drawn to scale—of a stalk of the Sarpat grass may help you to realize the fact. We measured it—seeing that it was of unusual height rather—and found it to be 21 ft. 3 in. 'If this is the grass, what must the

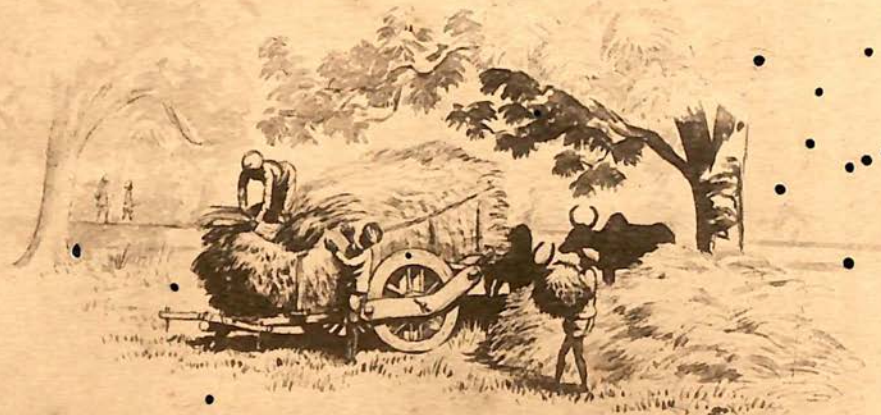
grasshoppers be!' as a sceptic remarked by way of ridiculing the idea of grass that could conceal elephants.

The stalks are solid, full of pith, and are used for many purposes, more especially for making chairs and couches, which are both strong and cheap; but the grass stalks are not pliable like cane.

Nov. 25.—Mrs. Luck left us yesterday on her way to Meerut, where the 15th Hussars are to be stationed till the end of December, when they are to start for England, and this time, surely, they will not be disappointed.[1]

Their sufferings on this last march to Kandahar, in August, were very great. At Sibi the heat was something awful, and there was a mud platform made for laying men on who were seized with heat apoplexy. They were laid there, stripped to the skin, under a punkah swung within a few inches of their faces, while relays of bhistis poured water incessantly over

[1] On the very eve of starting they were sent to Natal, where the Boer War was going on.



Dec 14. Taking away the grass
in our compound.

them. An officer told us he had himself seen fifty men laid out there at one time.

All the men of the 15th were well-seasoned picked men, and they only lost twelve men altogether. But other regiments in which many of the men were young suffered most fearfully. One regiment left 150 men at Quetta down with fever and heat apoplexy.

The food and the water both were bad, and the water, bad as it was, very scarce. They had once to march forty miles without water, and lost many native followers on the road. Poor fellows! their fate is comprised in that short sentence, but no words could picture what their sufferings must have been before they dropped behind to die a certain and horrible death.

All these things are the necessary and unrecorded sufferings incident to war, whether successful or unsuccessful, and neither newspaper readers nor historians give them a thought. But one cannot help wishing that the promoters of a war could be forced to watch the death-struggles of a few camp-followers, without any

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power to afford them relief. Even then, possibly, there would be few who did not feel equal to bearing with philosophy the misfortunes of others.

Dec. 9.—Yesterday Lord de Grey passed through on his way to the Doon, where he is to have some shooting. The Collector asked us to breakfast to meet him, and we sat down at eleven o'clock to an excellent Scotch breakfast—a great contrast, let me tell you, to the orthodox Indian one. The latter, as given in ninety-nine houses in a hundred, is merely a mistimed *dinner*, differing in hardly any respect from dinner except in not beginning with soup. You sit down to a blank table covered only with flowers, and the servants hand round course after course—fish, curry, cutlets, aspic, game—winding up by placing finger-bowls and dessert on the table! It is a custom we have never reconciled ourselves to, and in our own house we insist on having an English breakfast-table, but long and weary have been the struggles with every fresh servant before he will give up his attempt to show us what is proper.

After seeing the shooting-party start for the Doon, we went to the museum in the Botanical Gardens, which is devoted principally to botanical specimens of various kinds. There is a tea-tree there twenty feet high, out in the Doon—quite a curiosity, as you generally only see tea in small bushes like currant bushes. It is such an artificial plant that one hardly recognises it when for once it succeeds in being natural.

Dr. Aitchison was at the museum, arranging a quantity of plants he had collected in the Kurram Valley, and looking over a collection made in Cábul forty years ago by another botanist, whose specimens have hardly seen the light of day since. He found the work very interesting, as many plants which he had believed to be first discovered by himself he found to be already in this old collection. Two new plants he showed me were a yellow rhododendron and a rose-coloured honeysuckle. The work of collecting them had been unusually exciting owing to the great probability of being shot at any moment.

Amritsar, Dec. 11.—Robert's court being closed for some days on account of the Moharram festival, we have taken advantage of the holidays to make a short expedition westward. I cannot say that we shall have seen much of the Punjáb scenery, inasmuch as darkness fell shortly after we got into the train, and after ten hours we were turned out here at Amritsar at three o'clock in the morning. A heavy dew was falling, and we were glad of our thickest furs and wraps; the sky was brilliant with stars, and we counted nine of the first magnitude.

We drove to the Dâk bungalow, unrolled our bedding, made our beds with the help of the driver and our kitmatgár (!), and were quickly asleep. When we woke it was high time to begin the day, and directly after breakfast we started to see the city, leaving a verandah full of sellers of jade, shawls, and stuffs; harpies who swoop down like the Assyrians on every newcomer.

First we went to the famous Golden Temple, which is built in the middle of a great square

tank, and is approached by a causeway of white marble. It is a most sacred and venerated temple, containing as it does the *Granth*, or holy book of the Sikhs—and the precept, 'Take off thy shoes, for the place where thou standest is holy ground,' is enforced without any exception. There is a bench at the entrance, and there you sit down, take off your boots and shoes, and have a pair of thick cloth *casings* tied on instead; they are kept expressly for the use of Europeans, and make all feet alike gouty to look at. I was not even allowed to carry my little campstool, a chorus of protests arising, and had therefore to sit down from time to time on any step I could find.

I knew the temple well from pictures, but was disappointed in its size; it was so much smaller than I had imagined. It is entirely covered externally by a thin sheet of gold, and internally all the elaborately beautiful arches and domes are gold-washed. The great doors leading to the causeway are covered with thick silver plates, and other doors are of silver exquisitely

worked, the details throughout being most rich and magnificent.

The holy book is on a small altar under the central dome, having over it a splendid gold-worked velvet canopy; while a priest unceasingly waves a yâk-tail chowrie over it to prevent any profane fly from settling on it. All round are musicians playing the usual tuneless, monotonous music, each one apparently without reference to the others. Worshippers come in a steady stream, singly or in groups, prostrate themselves with humble fervour at a distance, throw a few flowers or cowries on to the carpet spread before the altar, and pass quickly out again.

Among the privileged dwellers in the place are numbers of blue pigeons like those of St. Mark's, and the ubiquitous crow—that animal without reverence and without fear.

We were shown the place of baptism for those who become Sikhs, but we did not see any baptisms, though told that there are many every day. Only Hindus apparently can become Sikhs, and they only by being baptized in this

temple. When once admitted among the Sikhs a man must never more let razor touch his hair, nor cut it in any way; consequently you can generally know a Sikh by his long whiskers tied back under his puggri, or by his long coils of hair, if you happen to see him without his puggri.

They are mostly fine-looking men, with a dignified bearing and keen, clearly cut features. Many of the women, too, I have noticed here as being very good-looking.

After seeing the Golden Temple, we went up a tall minaret to get a general view of the city and surrounding country, and it pleased me to watch the flocks of parrots darting and circling round us—rather large green parrots (or rather parrakeets, *P. Alexandri*), with big red beaks, and a patch of red on the wings. Just below us was a large tank with trees all round it, hung thickly with flying foxes screaming and chattering shrilly among themselves; they only fly at dusk, and in the daytime hang themselves up in the trees head downwards, and look like black bags.

We afterwards went through the bazaars, which are always amusing and full of swarming life. The great industry here is weaving and embroidering in silk; and, all the shops being open like stalls in a stable, one can see the manufactures in every different stage. In one shop you will see heaps and mounds of silk, soft and fluffy and of lovely colours, being sorted and packed in bales. In another will be boys squatting on their heels, with a hank of silk stretched between their knees, while they are disentangling and winding it. Then rows upon rows of shops with men embroidering shawls and stuffs, in most cases entirely by eye, and in a leisurely happy-go-lucky way curiously different from the look of an English workman. Now and again you come to a group of embroiderers sitting on a little mat spread in the sun by the side of the road; there they sit, quite indifferent to dust and turmoil, embroidering beautiful cashmeres which shall fetch great prices.

Almost all the women wear chudders of red-

brown cotton stuff, embroidered more or less elaborately in silks. These took my fancy very much, and we bought several, but the crowd and noise and crush round us in the narrow streets was so great that we were nearly stifled and had to flee. As soon as the people found that we admired these chudders they crowded round, thrusting their stuffs on us till we were half buried—each man screaming to us that all the others were rascals, and only his own embroideries were good.

We fled; and presently, walking down a narrow street, we saw a gay crowd inside a courtyard, and were told that some men were taking vows as Fakírs. So we went in and joined a crowd that was standing on the usual raised parapet or platform of a great well, from whence we had a good view of all that was going on, and a most brilliant scene it was. A tulip bed under a midday sun is the only thing to compare with the lovely colours of the crowd. Most of the men were dressed in white, and all had puggris of crimson and rose-pink,

yellow, or purple, while the boys were dressed in crimson or blue jackets, with sky-blue and gold puggris, pink, blue, or crimson waist-cloths, with flashes of gold and silver here and there.

On the terrace roofs all round the court were banks of still more brilliant masses of colour, for there all the women were gathered, sitting and standing, crowded together, clad in every colour of the rainbow.

The centre of all this crowd was a group of devotees taking the vows preparatory to a life of wandering and beggary. They had their heads close shaved, and before their mouths were tied pieces of cotton cloth marked with the mystic sign ┼, the meaning of which I do not know, but it is of religious significance. These men are followers of Vishnu, and are forbidden to take any animal life; so scrupulous are they, that for fear any insect should lose its life by inadvertently going down their throats they fasten this piece of cloth before their mouths, and have to wear it night and day until their death.

After staying some time we left, and had just got into our carriage when a man came hurrying after us with a dear little boy in his arms, whom I had noticed in the crowd, wearing a purple tunic and a huge crimson puggri like a halo round his chubby brown face. The man salaamed most respectfully, and said his little boy wished to make his salaam, and to be allowed to see the Mêm Sahib's black hands! My black *peau de Suède* gloves had excited his curiosity, and as I held out my hand he stroked it with solemn wonder in his great soft eyes. Native children of that age—he was about four—are so very pretty and fascinating: not in the least shy, but quite grave and composed.

The streets at Amritsar are very narrow, and the smells equal, I think, to those of Genoa or Naples. How many distinct ones we counted I could not say, but they were many—and all evil. The flies, too, swarm in more hideous numbers than in any place I remember: thick, black, buzzing swarms rise round you as you pass, and settle again instantly. The butchers'

shops present so horrible, so loathsome a sight that it is only wonderful how any creature can be found to buy the meat. Perhaps only blind people eat meat here! I was struck by the number of people we saw who had lost an eye. Robert says it is from smallpox; but whatever is the cause the result is remarkable: in every street you would see three or four one-eyed men.

The chief streets in the bazaar have a very gay look owing to the pillars and all the shop-fronts being painted in patterns of red, yellow, and blue—neat, but not gaudy. Whether this is their normal appearance, or is merely owing to the Viceroy's recent visit, I cannot say; loyalty in India is apt to break out in whitewash and coloured wash.

The frescoes are enlivened by paintings of Englishmen of the conventional type, dear to native artists—all wearing high, horrible chimney-pot hats, and leering frightfully. It is not always gratifying to see ourselves as others see us! Here and there are other frescoes of native

heroes, and scenes drawn from the Hindu mythology, some drawn with much spirit.

One thing is seen commonly here which I have only noticed before at Saháranpúr, and that is carts—ordinary bullock carts, apparently —*drawn by men.* Sometimes you will see as many as ten men to a very heavy load, but the usual number is three, and they seem able to draw great loads on their two-wheeled carts.

Amritsar, Dec. 12.—This morning we went to see the manufacture of carpets. The coachman pulled up in a very unsavoury street, and we were told we must leave the carriage there and go on foot. We passed through a yard where a train of bullock carts was halting or unloading, one entire cart being laden with iron parrot cages, prepared for the misery of future generations of parrots. Then through an archway into a large deserted-looking enclosure full of rubbish heaps, and having a deep colonnade of mud-bricks running all round. Under this were erected rude looms, of which there

must have been over fifty, but at the present time only six are being worked, owing to trade being slack.

The carpets were most beautiful in colour and design; all intended for the London market. They sell here at 1*l.* the square yard; I wonder what their price is in London? We saw one, measuring 12 feet by 10, which was nearly finished; six little boys, varying in age from eight to eleven, were working it, while one of them read out the pattern from a slip of paper. Their small brown fingers worked so nimbly, knotting on the various coloured wools and cutting off the ends with a knife, that one could hardly see what they were doing. It seemed amazing that such young boys could have attained such dexterity. Their pay is from four to six rupees a month—*i.e.* eight to twelve shillings *a month*; think of that, ye discontented operatives of England!

We were told they could make a carpet of the size they were then working in one month, so that the actual cost of the making would be

about 3*l.*, and as the carpet would sell here for over 13*l.*, there must be a handsome profit for the manufacturer over and above the cost of the wool and the interest on capital sunk. The whole trade here at present is monopolised by one Dêvi Sahai, an enterprising man, and one who earns my respect by having established the practice of fixed prices: you therefore go to his shop and buy what you choose, without the delay and vexation and mental wear and tear of having to wrangle about the price.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VISIT TO PATTIÂLA—LOSS OF CAMELS—WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?—GUNROOM—MOHARRAM FESTIVAL—WEARING SHOES NOT A MARK OF DISRESPECT—GREAT WELL—NATIVE BEDS—ECLIPSE OF THE MOON—COMPONENT PARTS OF NATIVE BAND—AMATEUR FIREWORKS.

Môti Bâgh, Pattiâla, Dec. 13.—I am writing this from Pattiâla, where we are guests of the Maharája. We reached Râjpúra, the nearest railway station to this, at six o'clock this morning, and were received by some of the Maharája's servants, who had prepared tea for us, and hot water to wash our hands, both of which were very welcome after a cold dusty night in the train.

As soon as the day had fairly broken, we started on our sixteen-mile drive to Pattiâla in an open carriage with four horses, which did the first nine miles in forty minutes. The scenery

was utterly uninteresting—bare and flat, with but little cultivation visible, and for the first twelve miles no trees of any kind but the Babúl (*acacia Arabica*), which, however excellent for firewood, and sweet-scented when in blossom, is very poor and monotonous as timber. It would be a dreary drive in a hired carriage and with the ponies of the country.

When we were within two miles of the city a scarlet-coated horseman met us and told us that the Maharája was coming out to meet us. He then sped back to give the news of our approach, and soon after we saw a troop of Lancers coming towards us with their green and gold pennons flying. After them came trumpeters and kettledrums, and then a fine carriage and four with the little Maharája seated alone in state, his brother following in another carriage and four, and some of the great officials in a third. It was quite a fine procession, as all the horses, carriages, and liveries were handsome and well turned out.

Robert got down from the carriage, and

Patiâla got down, and after the formal greeting Robert got into the Maharája's carriage, and the procession drove through the city to the Môti Bâgh palace, where guests are entertained—the guns banging, and crowds gathering all along the route to salute their young chief, who is a boy of eight years old. As we neared the Môti Bâgh the road was lined with troops, and as his carriage came in sight the band struck up 'God save the Queen' out of compliment to us. The little Rája and his suite came into the house with us and sat in state for a few minutes, after which they departed and left us to have our baths and breakfast.

This is a pretty house of thoroughly native style, in the middle of a large garden with artificial pieces of water and many fountains—all of which were playing on our arrival, almost sprinkling the orange trees which bent over the water, laden with their golden fruit.

Later in the day we were taken to see the city and the improvements which are being made by the Council of Regency which now

forms the Government. A fine college and a dispensary are being built, but both are only half finished, and the general impression made on me was very dreary: sandy barren neglected-looking wastes, covered with buildings not finished and others which had fallen down and were more or less ruinous heaps.

Canal water is being brought to the city at an enormous outlay, and no doubt when the water is actually brought the appearance of the country will be greatly changed. I only speak of it as it impressed me.

The city itself looks busy and prosperous, though I saw no fine houses or streets such as in Jaipúr or Alwar. The state, however, is said to be financially highly prosperous, and is almost the only native state not in debt, so one cannot judge by things which seem to us evidences of poverty and decay. It has just contributed 10,000*l.* to the Patriotic Fund, and is spending three millions sterling on its canal works, which looks as if money were plentiful.

The Maharája sent a regiment of cavalry and

one of infantry to Cábul in this war, as well as 300 camels, of which only 100 returned. Is it not strange if no one be held responsible for the death of the hundreds and thousands of camels and ponies in this weary war?

After we had been taken round the city we drove to the palace, where the little Maharája received us in full Durbar. He and his brother came to the head of the steps to receive us, and, Pattiâla gravely taking Robert by the hand, and his little brother me, they led us to the chairs of state placed in a semicircle.

After sitting chiefly in silence for some time, an array of trays containing shawls, weapons, &c., were brought in and laid at Robert's feet, when he accepted a puggrì of fine muslin and declined the rest, officials not being allowed in these degenerate days to accept the 'nuzzurs' which of old were the fruit of the pagoda tree. After the usual Atar and Pán had been presented, the Maharája asked if we would like to see his palace; so, again taking us by the hand, the two little boys led us very gravely through the

rooms, showing a profound indifference and weariness themselves to everything. The hall of Durbar is a fine one of great size, and hung with chandeliers enough to stock two Oslers' shops: some of them were the most enormous ones I ever saw.

We then went into the Mâl Khâna—literally goods' house—where we saw the state howdahs, gorgeous with massive gold and silver, velvets, and fringes. I counted twenty-three gold and silver ones, besides massive silver chairs and palanquins, and huge necklets, and frontlets, and earrings, and bosses of silver and gold for the adornment of the state elephants. Very magnificent do the great beasts look when arrayed in their full grandeur, and perfectly conscious of the enormous value of their trappings. At the Amballa Durbar in 1872 I well remember seeing a state elephant glittering in the splendour of all his ornaments, and having a candelabrum screwed on to each tusk, with candles, glass shades, and all complete; and so perfectly was he aware of how much depended on his steadiness

that he stood as rigid as if he were being photographed.

We then passed on to the clock-room, where are kept clocks enough to stock several shops; clocks from London, clocks from Paris, cuckoo clocks, skeleton clocks, musical clocks, magical clocks—and if there be any other clocks, there they were, none of them going, and none of any use or pleasure to anyone. Then there were two large cases full of watches; gold, silver, jewelled, enamelled, with banks and mounds of chains of all patterns and sizes. Also musical boxes enough to drown a bagpipe if all set going together, some of the size of a small portmanteau, others quite miniature.

But all this was nothing to the next room, the gun-room, where on a long table extending the whole length of a long room, lay two rows of nice new leather gun-cases, containing breech-loading guns and rifles by all the best English makers, besides other cases in heaps on the floor and piled on every available shelf. It was indeed a gun-room! The official in charge told

us there were 400 guns in cases, besides 100 without cases, and 150 pistol cases! The late Maharája, who died four years ago, would spend a lakh of rupees in one morning, at Calcutta, buying the contents of one or two gunsmiths' shops.

We saw a beautiful sword in a blue velvet case presented by Lord Lytton to the young Maharája a year or two ago, and another to his father by the Prince of Wales. But the swords could be counted by dozens, and were therefore nothing to speak of.

We were then invited to go and sit with the Maharája and look on at the procession of Tâzias, for it was the great day of the Moharram festival and was a public holiday. It was a sight never to be forgotten; the great quadrangle of the palace filled with a holiday crowd of thousands and thousands of men—all men—not a woman in all that assembly but myself. Every balcony and every window was crammed with heads and bright puggris, while the sky-line of the building was marked by an irregular closely-serried living

line of colour, which overflowed in a stream wherever there were flights of steps leading down into the quadrangle.

The Maharája and his court were seated under a fine canopy supported on silver poles and raised on a high daïs. The two boys wore coats of splendid kincob, shimmering with gold and colour, while the Maharája wore the famous Pattiâla necklace, a double row of emeralds and pearls, the pearls as big as peas and the emeralds as big as hazel-nuts. I noticed particularly that all the court wore patent-leather English shoes, and did not take them off even in Durbar; so it is evidently no breach of etiquette or respect for a native to keep shoes on, *provided* they be of patent leather and of English pattern.

The Tâzias are supposed to be models of the tomb of two early Mahommedan martyrs, and the Moharram festival is to commemorate their martyrdom. Immense trouble and expense are bestowed on the making of the Tâzias, and on the last day of the festival they are all solemnly paraded in procession and then destroyed—sunk

under water, or thrown into pits and buried. Some of those we saw were perfect gems of artistic work, and it would have gone to my heart to destroy them. Some, again, were poor common little things, borne along recklessly and all on one side by two very small and ragged children, who would cast a look of awe and admiration at their young chief as they passed. He, poor little boy, seemed to take no pleasure in anything; his face wore a weary vacant look of perfect apathy, most unchildlike. I could not but pity the poor little fellow, weighed down apparently by his grandeur and state and unable to feel pleasure like other boys of his age.

In front of him was a space kept clear for wrestlers, jugglers, and other performers. The wrestlers would have made fine bronze groups; their muscles were grandly developed, like a gladiator's, and when a man was thrown a roar rose from the crowd as I can fancy it used to do in the Coliseum, when a gladiator lay with the sword-point at his throat.

We stayed till we were tired, and then took our leave of the Maharája and his Prime Minister, Sir Dêwa Sing, K.C.S.I., a fine man with a kindly face, honest and intelligent. Indeed, we were very favourably struck with the countenances of all three members of the council; honest, honourable men all of them, to judge by looks.

We then drove back to our house, and Robert took me through the gardens, where are little temples and beautiful white marble seats scattered among the orange and cypress trees, and numbers of semi-tame pea-fowl.

But the wonder of the garden is a well, which might rank with an old Roman work; it is built of very small bricks such as the Romans used, and has a diameter of fifty feet clear, besides three storeys of arched galleries running round it, contained in the thickness of the wall. There is a broad road running at an easy slope from the water—which is a long way down, and said to be very deep—to the surface of the ground, which it reaches at a considerable distance from

the mouth of the well. The water is raised by bullocks, of which four pairs can work at the same time; and an aqueduct leads to one of the bastions of the garden wall, in which is a large reservoir. It is a wonderful work, and Robert says there is another precisely similar at the opposite corner of the garden, but that was too long a pilgrimage for me to take.

When we went indoors we warmed ourselves by a great brazier of charcoal, there being no fireplaces, and amused ourselves by counting the chandeliers and candelabra in the room. You may suppose it was a large room when I say that, so far from the chandeliers being very noticeable, I can quite fancy an unobservant person never even noticing their existence unless when lighted. We counted nineteen chandeliers and sixteen standing candelabra, many of them with rose-coloured shades, which must look very well when lit up. But for our benefit only eight lamps were brought in, which made but a dim general light.

Dec. 15.—We were glad to retire early that

evening, and slept dreamlessly on our most un-English beds. We each had a native charpoy, or bedstead, very low, and standing on four thick legs gaily painted and gilt. On this was a small crimson mattress, very soft and quite thin, over which *one* sheet of extremely fine calico was spread. A small crimson silk-covered bolster and a wadded silk coverlet completed the bed furniture.

At nine o'clock we started on our way back to Sahâranpúr, clattering out of the city of Patṭiâla under a salute of thirteen guns, a piece of pure courtesy, as Robert, not being a 'political,' is not entitled to any salute. As we came along in the train we could not but notice the difference in the look of the country; the ground covered with crops, and fine groves of trees near the villages. But there was much more water than there is in Pattiâla; the western Jumna canal is a splendid one, brimming to its banks, which are bordered thickly by fine trees. Then comes the Jumna itself, a shallow meandering stream at this season, wandering from side to side of its

Hindu Temple & Priest. Kanwal. Dec. 28.

huge ugly sandy bed, and ten miles this side again comes the Eastern Jumna canal, another noble-looking river, much finer at this time of the year than the great Jumna that feeds it.

It does seem amazing that two opinions should exist as to whether or not canals are beneficial to the country.

Sahâranpúr, Dec. 17.—Yesterday there was an eclipse of the moon. I had not remembered it, and when I went out at ten o'clock to look at the stars was astonished to see the phenomenon of a small blood-red globe just like an orange. It was so small that I never thought of its being the moon till Robert came and remembered there was an eclipse. It was then nearly over, and the bearer came shivering cheerfully to tell us that he had just finished bathing in the river—a ceremony enjoined on Hindus at the time of an eclipse. The night being bitterly cold, I felt grateful to my parents for not having been Hindus.

Dec. 27.—Christmas has again come and gone. We had service in church, read by the

Collector, for Sahâranpúr has no resident chaplain; and we had a larger congregation than I have yet seen here, varying in colour from white to black through many shades of blackishness. The church was prettily decorated with palm leaves, roses, and poinsettias, which latter are now in their glory.

Bands suddenly sprang into existence, and came round to sadden us, their component parts not always scientifically selected. In one band of five performers three had drums, which produce a maximum of noise with a minimum of education, and are therefore always popular; one had cymbals, and the fifth an uncertain-looking brass instrument capable of ear-splitting sounds. The musicians were gaily clothed and looked much like monkeys of a larger growth escaped from barrel organs.

In the evening I gave cakes and sweetmeats to the servants' children, little ragged mites with eager faces, which shone with delight as the sweets were poured into the dirty little chudders they held up. Afterwards we had a few fire-

works for their amusement—few, and often far between—for the servants could not always induce them to go off. But then the excitement when they did! It was much greater than if there had been any certainty. One 'anár,' which had sulkily and long refused to explode, did so at last so unexpectedly and with so tremendous a bang that the ayah who was standing behind my chair fell flat down.

Carlie was wrapped in breathless admiration, with his nose flattened against the nursery window.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

METEORIC FLIGHT THROUGH INDIA — HAILSTORM — JUMNA CANAL—MISFORTUNES NEVER COME SINGLE—TIDE OF LIFE FLOWING PAST OUR COMPOUND—SIGNS OF HOT SEASON—FOWLS OF THE AIR MAKE NESTS—NATIVE CHRISTIANS—A BEGGING LETTER.

Sahâranpúr, Jan. 3, 1881.—Mr. Elliot, the Census Commissioner, has just been with us for a day or two, on his meteoric flight through India. He has not long been out from England, but has visited Bombay, Madras, Mysore, Burmah, Calcutta, and Allahabad, and is now rushing through Lahore and Mooltán to Kurrâchi, then to Bombay and across again to Calcutta, before making a final run to Simla, where, like the cherub, he will sit up aloft and digest his Census statistics.

He has often to pass many consecutive nights in the train, and when he does stop it is merely to inspect books and returns, snatch some food,

with his loins girded, and catch the next possible train. Nowadays it is quite dark by six o'clock, and he finds the next few hours in the train very tedious to get through, so he carries with him a small writing or printing machine, which is worked by pressing down keys as on a piano, each key having printed on it the letter which it works. And this he uses to get through some of his correspondence, as very little light is required to work it by. It must be very fatiguing to the head, as you cannot see what you are writing, and are very liable to leave out words or letters. An Aid to Bedlam I should call it.

Jan. 21.—Life here is very monotonous, but, the monotony being pleasant and peaceful, life slips away unperceived at a wonderful rate ; it is like tobogganing down the vale of years.

The days are getting perceptibly warmer, sunheat being now 135°, and the house begins to feel quite cold in comparison with the outer air. For another two months it will be pleasant enough in the house, for a third it will be endurable, and then comes the ordeal by fire. We

have decided on my not going to Landour this year, except in case of illness, but to hold out here till September and then take a two-months' trip to Kashmir.

My fawn has become so active in the garden, eating off every bud and shoot as it appears, that, after enduring it till the whole garden looked as if a flight of locusts had lately settled there, I have had to tether him and regulate his allowance of rose leaves. On going into my dressing-room the other day I found him and the black kitten both on the toilet table, studying themselves with much interest in the glass. It would have made a most charming picture for an animal-painter.

March 4.—Yesterday evening as we were sitting by the fire—for we still have a small fire in the evening—I noticed a singular roaring sound which we could not account for, but thought it must be caused by some engine at the railway station. Presently it grew louder, and we went to the door to look out; a high wind was blowing, and in a minute more we found the

roaring noise was caused by the advance of a heavy hailstorm. Soon it reached us, and a fine sight it was, seen by the incessant flashes of lightning; the firing was sharp and severe, and one stone was picked up weighing 2½ ozs.

Our progress round the garden this morning was a mournful one; the ground is everywhere deeply pitted—showing that many of the stones were as large as hens' eggs—while it is strewn with deep drifts of orange blossoms, pear, lime, and mango blossoms, with branches and leaves scattered far and wide. The bedding-out plants have suffered less than might be expected—for the garden just now is a fragrant tangle of sweet-peas, wall-flowers, mignonette, verbena, phlox, mimulus, cornflowers, pinks, and petunias.

This morning is again calm and cloudless, and the blazing sun will bring out all the trees in full leaf in a day or two. In India the trees never agree as to the time of shedding their leaves. On the whole, they were at their barest in the middle of February, and are now bursting into new leaf; but some are only now getting

bare, and with their yellow leaves form a curious contrast to the tender young green of the others. None of them are leafless more than a month, and some not so long, while others have a slip-shod way of putting on their new leaves before shedding the old, so they are never bare.

Naushíra, March 17.—I am writing this from the engineer's bungalow on the Eastern Jumna Canal, ten miles below its separation from the river. We started two days ago, driving the first evening to Kálsia, fourteen miles, where we struck the canal, and slept the night at the canal officer's bungalow. Yesterday we came on here, starting at sunrise in order to get our march over before the heat became too great.

We had only driven a mile when a strange rattling began, and in a few minutes off came the tire of a wheel and rolled sociably alongside our carriage. There was nothing to be done but send back for a blacksmith, which delayed us quite an hour. We then started again, but alack! within ten minutes the tire was again

rolling by our side. We were in despair, but could only go on at a foot's pace to the next village—arrived at which, the blacksmith told us it would take some hours to put the wheel right, as the tire was broken.

By great good luck Dr. Jackson had been along the road that morning on his way back from a few days' fishing, and had changed carriages here. We were told his waggonette was still here, so we took the liberty of borrowing it; and, starting once again, presently reached the bridge, where we had to leave the carriage, and go along the canal bank. Here Robert's pony and a palki, or palanquin, for me were waiting; we had only four miles to go, and were thinking our march would soon be over—when crash! and down came my palki and I, the pole having broken! It was impossible to help laughing at our own misfortunes, but by this time it was nearly eleven, and we were both hot and hungry, and vexed at this new delay. Ropes and poles were produced, but it took some time before the palki could be made safe.

Finally we started once again, and this time reached Naushíra without any further mishaps. Fortunately the day was very cloudy, or I should have been quite ill by being out till twelve o'clock—so we cannot say we had bad luck on the whole.

The last four miles up the bank of the canal were quite lovely. The word canal only brings to your mind a thick sluggish stream flowing muddily between flat banks. I wish you could see this one—to all appearance a noble river, with clear water dashing over a bed of smooth stones, and a current so swift that any swimmer would be washed down some distance before he could cross; the banks sometimes high and irregular and cut by the force of the stream, at others smooth and grassy, with tall reeds and water plants along the edge, and fine trees with flocks of green parrots darting amongst them. In places the stream is only thirty yards wide, and runs swift and silent, then it spreads out to a width of sixty yards or more and foams in the shallows, while along its quiet backwater a herd

of cattle come to drink, and the banks are white with clothes spread out to dry, the Dhobies still standing up to their knees in the clear stream and grunting rhythmically as they beat their linen on their ribbed boards.

Wild flowers were growing in profusion, and I collected nearly thirty kinds, most of which were new to me. As you get near Naushíra the view becomes most lovely, the hills lying before you in a half circle, range above range in countless succession, till crowned by the snow range.

The lordly mahaseer, king of Indian fish, loves the clear swift water of the canal, and many a twenty-pounder has here gasped his last on the bank; but this cool cloudy weather makes him low-spirited and not to be tempted by any bait.

March 20.—The boundary of our compound on one side is the railway, the great Punjáb and Delhi line, along which the full tide of Indian life flows twice a year, when the great official world migrates to the cool heights of Simla.

It is now high tide, and viceroys, governors, and stars of all magnitudes are daily being swept past us in brilliant succession. But in our quiet backwater little we reck of all this rushing tide; one quiet day succeeds another, and we chronicle the smallest of beer.

April 1.—Heigh ho! for the roses! They are so beautiful that they make me feel sad. You do not understand this? Neither do I, but it is none the less quite true. They are now in their glory, and blooming in such quantities that we hardly know how to dispose of them. We send basketsful to neighbours who have none, and fill every bowl and vase we have, with great creamy roses, and tea roses, and blush roses, and huge yellow Marshal Niels, and still there are more; and their fate is to be eaten by the fawn, who enjoys them as much perhaps in his way as I do in mine.

Roses never grow in England in the joyous, lavish way they do here. They are an exquisite pleasure, but one I can only enjoy indoors, as the heat now is too great by nine o'clock for me to venture out.

To-day we hang our punkahs, and mosquito curtains have been up the last week, as all noxious beasts are now beginning to wax lively. The wasps fly about everywhere, with their long legs floating behind them in a way that is intended and felt to be aggressive and insulting.

The corn is turning white, the sky the same. The koel bird's odious flute is heard in triumphant crescendoes. The mangoes are setting, and all signs agree in telling us that the hot season has begun.

April 16.—Our house is in great favour with the fowls of the air as a nesting place. Our colony in and about the verandah now includes a pair of small owls, a pair of hoopoes, of blue rocks, of kites, of blue jays who scream and croak from morn to night, and two pairs of minahs.

They all live on very friendly terms, except when the minahs teaze the owls. One of the latter generally sits at the entrance to his hole, blinking comically and benevolently at us and all the world, and only wishing there was not

so much daylight; suddenly the two minahs fly up close to him, flap him with their wings and shriek rudely, making him hiss and look most demoniacal. If the truth were known, he has, I believe, appropriated the particular hole that the minahs had set their hearts on—and one has known featherless bipeds behave rudely in such circumstances.

I have just added to my parrot-house two baby parrots of the kind we saw in such flocks at Amritsar. Peter and Patty have they been dubbed, and droll little wretches they are, with weak and treacherous legs, and tails only just sprouting, but beaks nearly as large as their parents'. The other parrots take a great interest in them, but treat them civilly on account of their enormous beaks. Besides these I have two half-fledged young parrots of the beautiful plumhead kind (*P. rosa*), hardly bigger than young sparrows. Tim and Tiny are their names, but *which* is Tiny and *which* is Tim, 'Lord bless us all, that's quite another thing!'

May 10.—The heat has become very great,

and the fireflies along the river banks are beautiful to see. They make quite an illumination with their bright flitting lamps.

As we were coming home last night we met a wolf close by our gate and the doughty Spiker gave chase, but I suspect his heart failed him, for he soon came back and did not look as if he had eaten the wolf. This is the time of year when the wolves grow very bold, and we dare not let Carlie sleep in the verandah at night for fear a wolf might take him out of his cot, even with his servants round him.

May 15.—A native Christian woman came here yesterday with a begging letter, which I thought sufficiently funny to make a copy of, and thus it ran :

To the Charitable Ladies and Gentlemens of the Station :

Most respectfully sheweth with due submission we humbly begs to state the following statement of our under the asurance which circumstance has enduered us to paliateon your time attention.

That your three unfortunate petitioner not having any means of supporting ourselfs but looking to that great Maker above for support therefore beg that the charitable Ladies and Gentlemens will bistow on us three unfortunate to keep

our soul and body from starvation as in duty bound we shall ever pray for yourself and family long life and happiness your most respectfully sheweth

MRS. M. SMITH.

All this in a bold, clear, clerkly hand such as the incomprehensible Bâbu generally writes. If only his meaning were as clear as his hand-writing we should be saved much perplexity and some amusement.

I had an interview with Mrs. Smith, who is merely an English-speaking ayah, very respectable-looking and well-spoken. I said what a pity it was she should take to begging as a profession, when from some certificates she showed me it was evident she was capable of earning a living by taking service. She professed to be honestly anxious for service if she could get any—and the upshot was that I promised to give her a trial if I obtain a favourable reply as to her character from a lady to whom she referred me as knowing all about her. It is rather a risk, but if the woman is honest in her wish to take service it seems a pity not to give her a chance.

The missionary's wife here recommends me to be very careful, as she has little faith in native Christians: she has tried them in every way, and has had nearly twenty years' experience. It is a sad conclusion to arrive at; but all to whom I have ever spoken on the subject have been of opinion that a native Christian is rarely, very rarely, as trustworthy or honest as a Hindu or Mahommedan.

In some way or other conversion seems to have a deteriorating influence on the native character, and so generally is this the case, that people who in this presidency would take a Christian servant in preference to a Hindu or Mussulman are as rare and as Quixotic as the good people at home who will engage a lady help when they could get an ordinary servant.

Perhaps it is because Christianity is thought to involve the necessity of giving up their own national dress, and making themselves at once vulgar and absurd by wearing European garments. This destroys all self-respect, for they are conscious what humiliating objects they

look, and they at once take to cringing and whining, and adopt a mean shuffling carriage, as different as possible from the free upright bearing which so distinguishes the Hindustanis naturally.

What is the real cause I do not know, but the result is so self-evident that it damps the proselytizing zeal of all except those who honestly think that an immoral Christian is better than a moral Mahommedan.

Meanwhile I am waiting for an answer to my letter of inquiry about Mrs. Smith's character, but shall not be greatly surprised if before it arrives she has gone on to some other station to make her piously incoherent appeal to its 'charitable ladies and gentlemens.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

A BÂBU'S LETTER—AN UNSANITARY TREE—WEIGHT OF CLOTHES —A LIZARD'S CAPACITY—MOTHS IN POT-POURRI.

May 22.—The fears of the missionary's wife are, I fear, once more justified. My English-speaking Christian has never turned up again, and the lady to whom she referred me for a character has written to say she knows nothing of any such woman. On making inquiries, too, at the Serai—the place where native travellers put up—we find that this Mrs. Smith, who gives herself out to be a widow, was accompanied by a man who called himself her husband. So on the whole she does not seem to be a success as a convert.

As I have given you one specimen of the Native-English style of composition, I must just add one more which Robert received to-day :

after saying how that the writer has had to give up his former situation owing to some misfortune, it goes on, 'In a word I am poverty's prisoner, and I have been ridden down by it: all the chances of getting myself free from the clasp of poverty seem to me to be *looming in the distance.*

'I should feel highly obliged, nay, thankful and grateful, for your kindly providing me with some place which I may be able to drag on this miserable life *through this terra firma.*'

As Alice in Wonderland said, 'This seemed to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English.' That is the essential peculiarity of Bâbu English; the words are all good words, but what they mean is what no man can understand.

June 4.—The weather is now seasonably warm, rarely going below 91° at night in the house. I have a big basin of water by my side, and before lying down soak my head and hair and then try to get to sleep before the punkah has dried it, repeating the operation whenever I wake.

Peaches, figs, and melons of all kinds are now at their best, and strawberries not quite over—so we get as much fruit as we can eat, and find it a great alleviation to our trials.

There is a tree growing here which I do not remember having seen elsewhere, and about which we heard an amusing story yesterday; its botanical name is *Terminalia Bellerica*. I must tell you that for some time past we noticed a singularly horrible smell along the road to the Club, and daily buried our faces in our handkerchiefs as we drove by. At last our indignation waxed hot, and we said aloud at the Club that it should not be permitted to use any such evil-smelling manure on land close to a public road.

'Are you quite sure,' said someone present, 'that it is not the smell of that tree now in blossom there?' I rather scornfully assured them that the smell was that of some chemical manure, and certainly could not proceed from any flower.

I was, however, wrong, for it *was* the flower

of the Terminalia—as I quickly found out when a branch in blossom was brought.

Well, the story is, that a doctor lately appointed to a station in the Punjáb had several times reported a certain road in cantonments to be in a highly unsanitary state, and at the next cantonment committee he again brought the matter before the meeting. The cantonment magistrate was a bit of a wag, and, after listening with the utmost gravity to the complaint, he produced a branch of this abominable tree, and said, 'I think this is the cause of the smells you report on, but I never before heard of its being considered unsanitary.' The doctor held his handkerchief to his nose and collapsed.

July 1.—Heavy rain has at length fallen, and cloudy skies and east winds seem to show that the monsoon has really broken. The toads and frogs think so too, and sing a deafening chorus of joy every evening, while occasionally a cheerful hoarse little solo proceeds from under a wardrobe or some retired corner.

Aug. 18.—Since last writing in my diary we

have got through a great part of the hot season, nor has it been a severe one—*i.e.* in comparison with others. Carlie has got through the heat very well, and, though white and soft, poor little man, is as well as a child can be. For curiosity's sake I have just weighed an entire suit of clothes of Carlie's and mine, as worn by us for the last four months; his comes to six ounces, and mine to four pounds, in both cases only excluding shoes.

We patronise largely a native manufacture of this place, a kind of thin cotton muslin called Sussi, which has the peculiarity of not being transparent, and is therefore much cooler to wear than any white material, as it can be worn without any lining. It is only sixpence a yard, and is the perfection of summer wear in this climate.

My family of pets is thriving, and now includes some minahs—birds of the starling tribe—and a young golden oriole, who all live out in the garden and fly down on to my arm the moment I leave the house. The minahs are most friendly

birds; they attend us in a flock wherever we go, hopping round our feet to catch the insects we disturb in the grass. The natives never attempt to tame birds in this way, and believe it is by magic that I keep them from flying away. Some of the servants have mentioned in the bazaar how that my parrots fly back to me if they ever escape from the parrot-house, as often happens; but they say they will keep silence in future, as no one believes them, and they are only called liars.

Sept. 14.—A passing ripple on the pool of our monotony has been made by the discovery yesterday of a man's dead body just outside our grounds. It had apparently been there many days, being already past recognition. How it came there is, and will probably remain, a mystery. Whether the man was murdered, as seems most likely, or overtaken with fever and died where he sank down in the tall flowering grass—a nameless waif has passed away; and probably no inquiry for him will ever be made, though in some distant village his return may

be looked for by wife and children for many a weary month.

A few days ago a brood of young wildfowl was brought to me; such pretty little things, covered with fluffy black and grey down, with very large fan-shaped tails, and sharp claws to their webbed feet, by means of which they climbed up a 'chik' or screen of split bamboo with great speed and ease. We do not know what they were, and shall never know now, as they all died in spite of my utmost efforts to rear them.

In England one thinks of lizards with feelings of repulsion and disgust, and it is curious how soon one gets accustomed here to seeing them about the house. Almost every wall lamp has its attendant lizard, which conceals itself during the day, but glides out the moment the lamp is lighted, to catch the insects which are sure to be attracted by its light.

Our sympathies ought to be with the insects, but oddly enough they are not, and sometimes at dinner our forks remain poised in the air

while we watch with a positive fascination the tactics of a lizard stalking a moth. He takes short stealthy runs, stopping absolutely motionless at intervals, till he gets within a foot of his victim; he then steals along like a cat for a few inches, and then comes a rush almost too quick to follow with the eye—and the moth has disappeared.

A gentleman told us he one day watched a lizard swallow forty-two white ants, and attempt a forty-third; but it could not be got down, and remained with its wings hanging out from the corners of the lizard's mouth.

Lately I have been puzzled by the number of moths which have swarmed in my wardrobe; for it contains hardly anything but linen, and nothing woollen that could serve as a breeding place for them. Again and again the ayah and I have turned the things out, raising quite a cloud of moths, but still unable to guess where they came from, till one day I noticed that some bags of roseleaf pot-pourri that I had placed among the linen had become very thin and flat,

and on opening one the mystery was solved. Moths, and eggs, and grubs in every stage were there, and nothing left of the pot-pourri but some salt. Moths evidently like their food highly spiced, for I had mixed many ounces of cloves, cinnamon, and other spices with the rose-leaves. I never heard of moths breeding in pot-pourri, but it is a warning for the future.

CHAPTER XXX.

JOURNEY TO MURREE—START FOR KASHMIR—A RAGER—SWIMMING THE JHELUM—SATANIC CHARACTER OF CHIKÔR—AYAH'S APPRECIATION OF SCENERY.

Saturday, Oct. 1: Murree.—After much difficulty and many delays about getting leave, Robert received a telegram last Saturday evening to say he might go on two months' leave at once; so, as there was much sickness about, we determined to try and get off on Monday if possible. That very night, Carlie and I got fever, and it was a bad preparation for the two days' hard work that had to be got through, especially as the ayah fell ill too, and could hardly help at all in the packing. However, one way and another, all was done that had to be done, and on Monday evening we started from Sahârânpúr, a wan and hollow-eyed set of mortals fleeing from the regions of sickness.

We booked all our heavy luggage through to Rawul Pindi, but we ourselves broke the journey at Lahore, where we arrived about nine o'clock Tuesday morning. We rested for the day at a hotel, starting again at five o'clock on the second half of our railway journey. We were now on the Punjáb Northern State Railway—a fact we soon became aware of by the extraordinary slowness of our progress; during a great part of the way they only *profess* a speed of twelve miles an hour, but even that was too reckless for our driver, and we often reduced it to eight. We were very lucky to secure a carriage to ourselves, for there were only two first-class carriages, and they were very small; our compartment was the last one, and had two back windows like a coupé, which faced two others belonging to the reserved carriage for native women. Finding they could see into our carriage, they fully availed themselves of the privilege, and watched us with the untiring interest and curiosity with which we might watch a family of gorillas. At night we wished

them anywhere else, for a carriage full of macaws could not have been more noisy; all night long a Babel of shrill chattering and laughing, with a few still more noisy wrangles.

The ayah was too ill almost to move, and I was so worn out by the shaking and the pains in my head and bones from fever that I did not know whether to sit or lie or stand. The heat, too, was oppressive and suffocating, and poor little Carlie moaned and tossed about all night, once rolling off the seat with a thud. When morning dawned, we found we had left the interminable monotonous dead flat of the plains, and were passing through broken country, worn into curious ravines and walls by the action of water. We actually passed through quite deep cuttings, in which strata of waterworn stones, sand, and clay alternated. On reaching Rawul Pindi, we went to a hotel to rest before doing anything further; we found it much cooler than Lahore, being only 83° in the house; indeed we hardly needed punkahs, but had them to keep off the mosquitoes.

On the road.

The sick bed on a journey.

Punjabis.

Toolungah & Suttee.

We started off the heavy luggage at once for Murree, in a two-wheeled cart, under the charge of our bearer and bhisti. The distance is only thirty-eight miles, but these carts take twenty-four hours to do it.

We ourselves started the next morning at dawn in a tonga, which is a two-wheeled thing drawn by two or three horses, and will carry six people, including the driver; it has a canvas hood, and combines strength and lightness as much perhaps as is possible. I had the seat of comfort, by the driver. All the others are sideways as in a waggonette, and as the cart is much tilted back by the weight of the syces who stand somewhere at the back, it makes the position a very tiring one to maintain for six hours of incessant jolting. No invalid could attempt the journey in a tonga, he would have to go in a doolie carried by men.

The jolting is quite wonderful. Our three half-broken ponies flew along, driven with a loose rein and a resounding whip, and away we leapt and banged and hopped behind them,

occasionally getting a jolt that really made our teeth clatter as we hopped over a piece of rock as big as your head that had been put to scotch some former cart-wheel.

For the first seventeen miles there is very little rise, but after that the road rises steadily and often steeply. The scenery then begins to be lovely, the hills clothed with beautiful pine trees that rustled in the fresh breeze which put new life into us as it swept past.

We had very good ponies, too, as soon as the ascent began—strong, steady beasts, who played no pranks, but threw their weight into the collar (bearing-reins happily being unknown) in a business-like way most contrary to the habits of ordinary dâk ponies. One pony is in the shafts, and the other two are harnessed, one on each side of him, to a splinter bar, which is simply laid across the shafts behind two iron pins, and on which a syce generally sits in order to balance the cart better.

At the end of six hours we had reached Murree, and the driver pulled up exactly oppo-

site the thirty-eighth mile-post, and calmly told us he could go no farther—it was against orders, and we must get out and walk to the hotel! To anyone feeling tired and ill this is not a pleasing surprise; but there is no help for it, and a clamouring crowd of coolies quickly surrounded us, and laid forcible hands on all our effects.

Fortunately we had only half a mile to walk, and the air was so exquisitely cool and pure that it made one feel a different creature. It is a pleasure merely to breathe in such air, and the contrast with the heavy sultry air we have breathed for the last six months makes it act like a strong tonic on us. Carlie has quite shaken off his fever now, and it is delightful to see his eyes so bright and clear after their heavy glassy look this last week. We are now only waiting for the servants to get well before we make our start into Kashmir.

We have bought dandies, cooking pots, camp beds, a small tent, and other necessaries, and shall have everything ready in a day or two.

Murree is in no way very different from other hill stations ; you look down upon a vast heaving ocean of hills, and perhaps get the idea of being far in among the hills, more than at any other station I have seen. Its height is the same as Mussoorie—about 7,000 feet.

Oct. 5.—This morning we made our start from Murree, getting off very late owing to the difficulty of finding enough coolies, and of arranging their loads when found. Some coolies carry their loads on their heads, others on their backs, and others again on their shoulders, slung from a pole, and you cannot get any one to alter his custom on an emergency ; so it is a matter of much thought and arrangement distributing the loads in the fittest way. Then rope invariably runs short, or bundles refuse to be doubled up as you had calculated on, and consequently more coolies have to be procured.

However, by twelve o'clock all difficulties were surmounted, and we got under weigh—Robert riding, I in a dandy, and the boy and his ayah in a doolie, which is like a miniature old

four-post bedstead with *very* short legs, and is slung on a pole and carried by four men. The curtains can be drawn all round and buttoned securely in case of rain or cold wind—so it makes a capital travelling carriage for a child. We had with us six servants besides—of whom only the bearer was mounted—and twenty coolies carrying our beds, bedding, and other baggage. When we had passed the last house in Murree we felt that we were fairly off, our faces towards Kashmir, and eleven days' marching before us. Signs of civilization, however, continued to meet us along the whole of our first day's march. About three miles after leaving Murree we came to the race-course, a very small patch of flat sward, round which the horses have to go several times for a race. The boy who came with Robert's pony, a sad and sorry-looking creature, told us with much pride that this same pony had once won a race here. This so surprised us that we asked more particulars, and our surprise was qualified on learning that only one other pony had run, *and he died.*

We met several bullocks laden with planks, which are apt to be awkward things on a narrow path, as a slight swerve of the animal brings the planks right across the road; their drivers, however, are fully aware of this danger, and are extremely careful when passing anyone.

The scenery is lovely, the road passing through forests of horse-chestnut, sycamore, oak, and fir—the latter being the same fir I noticed at Dêoban last October, very tall and narrow; many of the trees must have been nearly 150 feet high. I found a quantity of beautiful wild gentians, but not many other flowers.

We halted for luncheon in a charming place, where we lit a fire of fircones to warm up Carlie's stewed fowl and rice, spread our rugs on the short grass, and were thoroughly enjoying our first picnic, when two loud peals of thunder crashed overhead, and without any further warning down came a smart shower. Carlie and his ayah were quite safe in their four-poster, and he had arrived at the dessert stage and was composedly eating 'plants,' as

he calls plantains. The rain was luckily soon over, and we started again on our way, but found the going by no means so good as it had been before the storm; the soil is chiefly fine red clay, and the path after rain becomes nearly as slippery as ice. Marching in the rainy season must be both tedious and dangerous in these hills.

We reached the Dâk bungalow of Dêwal at five o'clock, and found it crowded with travellers returning from Kashmir; but by two bachelors consenting to double up we managed to get a room to ourselves. We find it very much warmer than at Murree, and to-morrow's march will take us right down into the valley of the Jhelum, which will be still hotter. It is a severe trial to the fresh meat and butter we have brought with us, and as for the next ten days we shall be marching along the valley, I fancy we shall feel the heat very much.

Oct. 6: Dêwal to Kohâla.—Our march to-day has been a very ugly, hot, and treeless one, all downhill to this bungalow—the last on British

territory—which is only 2,000 feet above the sea, is enclosed by hills, and feels oppressively hot after our week at Murree.

We halted for our mid-day rest only four miles after starting, as the sun was very powerful, and at that spot we found a tree to rest under—quite a rarity on this march, where the hills are covered with low scrub, chiefly justicia and stunted oleanders. It was only in the villages that any trees at all were to be seen, and they were thin-leafed and dwarfed—mulberry and pear mostly.

A great deal of land is under cultivation, the principal crops being maize and cotton. The maize is all cut now, and the cotton ripe—bursting white and fluffy from the pods. Pumpkins, too, are grown in great numbers, and lie, fat and yellow, dotted over the fields.

While we were halting, a train of men laden with apples from Kashmir came by, and we bought a dozen apples for a shilling. Very dear, I think.

Kohâla to Chattar, Oct. 7.—We started at

seven o'clock this morning to get the march over before the heat of the day. Immediately after leaving Kohâla we crossed the river Jhelum by a fine suspension bridge, and were now in Kashmir. The road runs at a high level along the valley, and is bad and stony, besides being treeless and hot, and through scenery not the least fine or interesting.

The hills were covered with low bushes, rarely attaining the dignity of a tree; among them were quantities of wild pomegranates, now ripe, which the coolies were eating all the time. The march was only nine miles, and we got to the rest-house by 10.30, by which time the heat was sufficiently great to make us thankful to have a roof over our heads.

The difference between the bungalows in English territory and this one is very striking. The dirt, and the absence of any decency in the arrangement of the bungalow is thoroughly native; the rooms have floors of beaten earth, grimy plastered walls, and doors composed of two planks, which, being far too narrow for the

doorway, have a gap of some four inches in the middle. The shutters to the window frames (glass there is none) are made in the same way, and are equally inefficient for securing privacy. Fowls walk about everywhere, and I should be glad if they were all roasted.

Chattar to Rhâra, Oct. 8.—We again marched soon after dawn, for the heat up this valley is great. In May and June it must be intolerable, I should imagine. The road ran by the river all the way, and the noise of the rushing, chafing water made conversation fatiguing; the road was not as bad as yesterday's, certainly, but we should not have known it was good unless we had been told so. In several places we had to make a *détour* upwards or downwards, the road itself having been carried down into the Jhelum by an earth-slip; the only wonder is that it can be maintained as a road at all, for it runs along the side of a very perpendicular hill composed of loose rocks, earth, and rubble. I hardly saw a bit of sound rock the whole way.

In the cool of the evening we scrambled down to the river shore—a grand jumble of stones and boulders. Our coolies had lit fires, and were preparing their food—one of them kneading his dough in a natural stone trough worn by the water. While we were sitting there, listening to the fine sound of some roaring rapids a little higher up, some men came down to cross the river to their village on the other side. They first took off all their clothes except their waistcloths, and, tying them into a bundle, one of the men put it on his head, and then, blowing up their goatskins, they launched themselves into the mighty stream—one swimming on his back, with his arms clasped round the inflated skin, the other at top, with the bundle on his head. It was curious to watch, and looked as if the under man might very easily be drowned. We watched the bundle rising and falling on the waves of the swift current, till we saw the men crawl out on the opposite shore, having been carried down about 150 yards.

Rhâra to Tin:âli, Oct. 10.—Our march from Rhâra was eleven miles, again along the course of the river, and in places surprisingly bad—nothing but a bed of loose rocks and stones. I rode most of the way on a hired pony—a mere rat, but singularly clever in never making a false step; he had a native bridle on which effectually neutralised all attempts on my part to guide him, the reins, which were of string, being knotted together at the neck. It was a wise arrangement, for he knew every inch of the road, and had his favourite track, which he followed much better than if I had interfered.

The road was prettier than before, being well wooded towards the end. We marched seven miles without halting, and then rested for the heat of the day under the shadow of both rock and tree, with the Jhelum foaming in front of us.

We found this bungalow nearly empty, for the military leave season ends on the 15th, and so the officers who are still in the country

are tumbling over each other in their hurry to get back, and making forced marches of two or three stages a day.

Tintâli to Ghari, Oct. 11.—Yesterday's march being only a short one of seven and a half miles, we enjoyed the luxury of a long sleep and a quiet morning, starting after luncheon, by which time the road was in shadow. Robert had been out with his gun before breakfast, and had brought in three black partridges—a welcome addition to our larder.

There is a kind of dodder which has been very plentiful the last two days, creeping over every tree and plant, and often smothering them in its meshes. It renders itself quite independent of its own roots, thriving equally well with its stem severed; its blossom is very much like that of a lily of the valley, and has a powerful and rather disagreeable scent. We wish it were not so common.

This rest-house takes its name from a large village on the opposite side of the Jhelum. There is an island between this and the village,

on which is a grove of fine trees—the roosting-place of numberless crows.

This morning a woman, clothed in a marvellous combination of rags, came to beg for some cloth to wrap the dead body of her child in, who died of fever an hour or two ago. There happens to be a cloth-seller at this place, so we were able to help the poor thing, who seemed half distracted.

Ghari to Hatti, Hatti to Chakôti, Oct. 12.—Our march yesterday was nine miles, and along the worst road we have yet come—quite unrideable in parts, even on these sure-footed country ponies.

To-day we have come thirteen miles, through lovely scenery, and, with the exception of a short but very bad bit at starting, the road has been excellent—smooth and earthy instead of rough and rocky, and running along the side of grassy pine-clad hills sloping so precipitously that in hardly any place could we have sat or stood.

This Chakôti bungalow is placed high above

the river, so that for the first time for many days we miss the roar of the water, and rather enjoy the silence. The river has become very narrow, and dashes along, chafing furiously at its rocky bounds. It seems incredible that in three days more it will become smooth and broad and gentle, so that we shall live on it and make our home in a boat.

Chakôti to Uri, Oct. 13.—To-day's march has been fifteen miles; the road hideously steep and bad in parts. We used to be puzzled to find out on what principle the natives described a road as being bad or good; but we have now discovered that as long as there is space between the stones and rocks to place their feet they will call the road good, and only bad when each man has to have another to support him, and climb or step from one rock to another. Nor will they admit that there is a descent unless it is so steep as to make it a work of difficulty to go down without coming on your head. They themselves being always on foot, judge of a road simply from the standpoint

of their own bare feet, and of course they can go over almost anything without finding much difficulty.

The cleverness of the Kashmir ponies in going up and down the frightful places they do is most surprising. I would far rather ride one of them, half-fed, shoeless, and but ten hands high, than any pony I have ever ridden costing ten times his price.

We fell in with long trains of mules and bullocks, those we passed being laden with salt, and those we met laden with ghee and walnuts. They are always tiresome to meet and worse to pass; for the road is very narrow, and, with a precipitous hillside hundreds of feet below you, seems narrower than it is; as a rule the animals are very quiet and good-tempered, but occasionally one that has been passed gets into a panic, and comes charging along in a frantic hurry to join his companions, and this makes you glad when the seemingly endless file is passed.

The scenery to-day has been fine—so far as huge bold hills and a rushing torrent must be,

but the bareness of the mountain sides spoils their beauty. On some of the slopes have been bushes—hawthorn and pomegranate, with wild hemp and southernwood and indigo, but rarely a tree. Towards the end of our march Robert got his first shot at Chikôr, a bird very much like a French partridge; a wayfarer, who saw him going down the hill side after them, observed to me that he would not get any—'for they were perfect Shaiṭâns (devils) and never waited for anyone.' In spite of this great lack of courtesy on their part, Robert shot two of them, but one unluckily fell into the river.

This bungalow of Uri is built high above the Jhelum, close to a native fort, and is on a cliff that rises sheer three hundred feet from the water. We saw one of the frail-looking twig bridges crossing the river at a giddy height, and I wished we could have seen it nearer, but we had not time.

There are numbers of jackdaws here, the first I have met out of Europe; their saucy familiar voices sounded most friendly, and I could hear

no Kashmir accent. They are rather different from our English jacks—shorter and thicker in the body.

Uri to Pâmpur, Oct. 14.—Our march to-day of twelve miles has been through glorious scenery—all forest after the first hour, in which we had to descend from our Uri cliff, and then have a steep stony stiff climb up the other side. The sudden change, on rounding the shoulder of the mountain, to thickly-wooded slopes was delightful; the wild apples, pears, peaches, apricots, and berberries, were all putting on their autumn tints, and contrasted magnificently with the deep sombre green of the great towering deodars and pines. Everywhere were strewn huge grey boulders, covered with beautiful lichens, and with tangles of rose and clematis and vine. Horse-chestnuts, poplars, hawthorn, and many other familiar trees were mixed with others quite strange to us; as we rode along we heard many a thud as an apple fell to the ground, and the coolies ate any that lay near the path.

The last two miles the road ran along a flat strip at the foot of most magnificent cliffs—sheer rock, rising in a wall three to four hundred feet high, of which the strata lay perpendicularly. Here and there a deodar had contrived to take root, and grew up parallel with the wall of rock, while at the top, and sloping back in every hollow, were masses of grand firs and cedars.

Forest officers do not seem to be a Kashmir institution, for the trees are barbarously treated; there is hardly a fine deodar but has half its trunk laid bare, where the bark has been stripped off for making into torches. It is cruel to see. The horse-chestnuts are nearly all pollarded, and look most pitiable with their bare poles and an immense stack of their own leaves made in the fork of the trunk; it seems too much like seething a kid in its mother's milk.

This Râmpúr bungalow is an excellent one, and placed certainly in a most lovely spot. Our servants have no eye for scenery, and I

fancy greatly prefer a flat boundless plain to any combination of mountain and forest. I remarked to my ayah what a beautiful place this was: 'Yes,' she replied enthusiastically;—'the bath-rooms are most convenient!'

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CHAPTER XXXI.

LAST MARCH—BY BOAT TO SRINAGAR—THE VENICE OF INDIA—WINE MANUFACTORY—GOVERNMENT OF KASHMIR—WANT OF SYMPATHY BETWEEN RULERS AND PEOPLE.

On the Jhelum, Oct. 16.—Yesterday was our eleventh day's march from Murree, and our last. On leaving Râmpúr we no longer followed the course of the river, and after marching for four hours through forest we suddenly emerged to find that a most surprising change had taken place in the scenery. The high mountains had vanished in the distance, and in their stead were low bare hills that might have been Scotch moors, while before us lay a plain that had evidently been a lake not so very long ago in the world's history; and through it our friend the Jhelum was winding, altered beyond recognition, broad and smooth and placid—not ruffled by any

thought of the fierce and stormy career that lay so near before it.

We had first a long pull to cross a low line of hills, and then a steep descent took us down to the town of Bâramulla, where we again joined the river Jhelum. The rest house is built on the south or left bank of the river, but the town is on the north bank, and is reached by a bridge built on stacks of deodâr trunks, very picturesque as well as sound in principle, for—unlike our engineers' bridges—they are never carried away in the rains.

The roadway is made of rough logs laid chevron-wise, and is anything but pleasant going for either man or beast; we crossed to see the native town—picturesque and evil-smelling in the highest degree. The houses are most of them built entirely of wood—some of roughly hewn logs, others well built and elaborately carved—but all alike having doll-like windows about eighteen inches square, just big enough for a head to look out. I cannot think where the legs belonging to the head could be stowed,

Roberto ghirardelli
Oct. 9th
Basket maker. Tivoli Oct. 9th

for the lower storey seemed to run right up to the windows.

Most of the shops were shut, it being then late in the day; but those that were open were all stocked much after the same pattern—some gay printed cotton stuffs, from Mañchester apparently, some balls of raw cotton, and great lumps of salt. 'Window dressing' is not an art studied here, partly, no doubt, owing to there being no windows—to the shops at least.

The people greeted us with 'salaam' very courteously, and we had a large following before we had ridden far. They are certainly as good-looking a race as ever I saw, of such a fine type—clean-cut features, with splendid eyes and delicately marked black eyebrows, and clear pale brown skin.

We have seen but few women, and those only of the lowest classes; their universal and apparently sole garment appears to be a voluminous smock of thick heavy material, once white, but never since. On their heads they wear a small chudder, not enveloping them as

those of the Indian women do, but hanging generally straight down in beautiful though dirty folds.

This morning we took boat, or rather three boats, to go up the river to Srinagar, a journey of two nights and three days at this time of the year, when the river is low and no short cuts are available. The boats are fifty feet long and six feet wide and draw very little water; over the centre part is a little mat house, the walls being formed of strips of matting which you can roll up or let down as you prefer. One boat is our sitting and dining-room, the second is our bed-room, where our two camp beds just fit into the width of the boat, and the third our kitchen and servants' quarters.

The stern end of each boat is occupied by the boatmen, with their sisters and their cousins, their mothers and their aunts, with an occasional grandmother; all of whom take some share in the work. They are only divided from us by the mat wall, but are so quiet and well-behaved that they are no annoyance at all.

On the Jhelum, Oct. 17.—This boat life is most slow and lazy; we seem to be passing through the land where it is always afternoon. We are towed up by three of our crew, usually a man, woman, and small child, who plod manfully but slowly along the bank or through the shallow water. The boat often grounds on a sand bank, when one of the women on board jumps over and pushes till we are afloat again. Occasionally the crew take to their paddles and paddle in a curious intermittent way, working furiously for a little while, and then ceasing altogether—but on the whole we progress about two miles an hour!

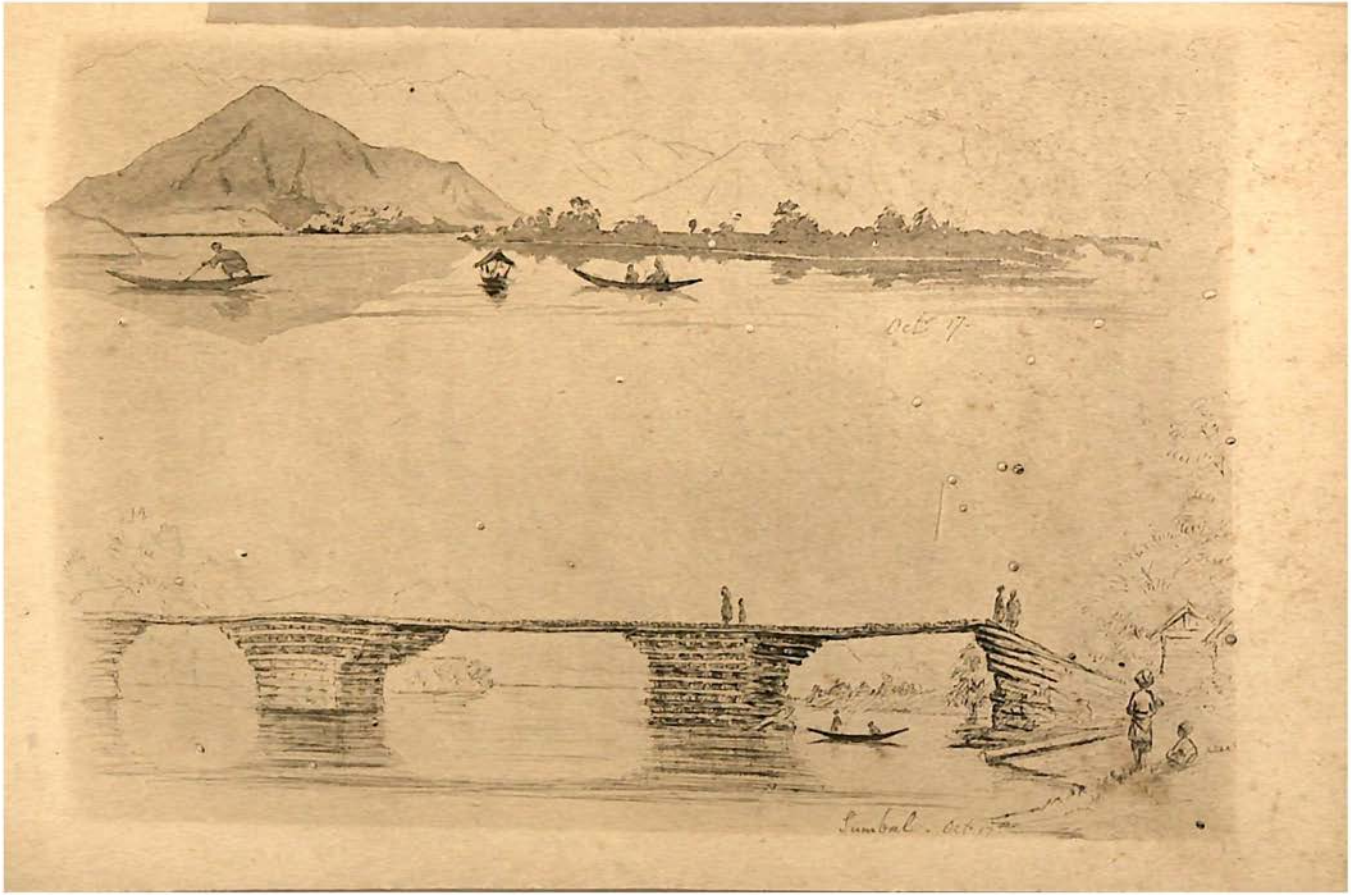
Last night when dusk fell we moored by the bank, and stayed there till daybreak. We found it extremely cold, but fortunately were well provided with furs and blankets, and slept soundly as soon as we had become accustomed to the rats which scrabbled about the boat.

All yesterday the banks of the river were very ugly, flat, muddy, and treeless; but to-day the scenery has altered, and grand mountain

ranges have come in sight, beautiful in outline and colour. The view is most lovely just above the village of Sopûra, a village with wooden houses and the same dolls' windows as at Bâramulla, and a bridge on wooden stacks.

The whole river is in places alive with boats, shaped not unlike gondolas, having both ends standing high out of the water. Some are very large and heavy, and are laden with wood going to Srinagar, a voyage that takes them ten days. Other boats of all sizes are laden with singâras or water-chestnuts, which grow in the shallow water at the river's edge, and it is said bring in an annual revenue of 10,000*l.* to the Maharája. There are two kinds of them, both such curious-looking things, with long spikes like horns ; one is like the head of an ox-fiend, and both are rather Satanic, but small, not bigger without the horns than a cobnut. They are much liked by the natives, and are nice to eat when once you can get their shells off, but I should never eat them if I had to shell them.

Srinagar, Oct. 20.—On the afternoon of the


Oct. 17
Sumbal. Oct.

third day we sighted the city of Srinagar, the Venice of India. As we neared it the boats on the river got thicker and thicker till it seemed a wonder that our boatmen avoided collisions, especially as they took to paddling and sent us along at a really good pace.

Presently we passed under the first of the six bridges which cross the river at Srinagar, all built on the same pattern as the one at Bâramulla. The resemblance of Srinagar to Venice lies chiefly in the way in which everyone lives on the water, and in the busy crowd of boats of pleasure and of business, either darting about or moored in close rows at the bank. The houses have little resemblance to the stately Venetian palaces; they are nearly all of them built of wood, many in a perfectly ruinous condition, and all with a fair crop of grass on the roof which gives a peculiarly uncared-for and ruinous look to the whole. The lower part of a house is little more than foundation or cellar, and must be under water when the river is high; the upper part projects and is supported on tall piles,

and almost every house has pretty wooden balconies and a great deal of carved lattice work. Glass in the windows is almost unknown, and the cold in winter must be intense, as the window openings have only shutters of open lattice; in many instances these have paper pasted over them, which by no means adds to the look of tidiness, being generally torn and flapping in sundry places.

All this notwithstanding, the general effect is picturesque in the extreme, and Srinagar must be Elysium to an artist. There is hardly a house but would make a charming picture, in spite of ruin and paper, and hardly a boatwoman but would make a still more charming one—dirt and rags included.

After passing the fifth bridge we came to the Maharája's palace, which adjoins the fort. It is a big rambling building, but neither grand nor beautiful from the outside. Opposite to it are some of the most wretched and ramshackle of all the wooden houses along the river—St. James's and St. Giles's in juxtaposition.

Another bridge and we come in sight of a fine reach of the river, bordered by a wall of poplars planted so close that they seem almost to touch one another. They are now in their brilliant autumn robe of pale yellow, and interspersed with them are some magnificent chenár trees (*Platanus orientalis*), now in all the glory of deepest red and orange and russet, while in the background rise mountains of softest blue and darkest purple—the whole reflected in the broad smooth river as in a mirror, making the most gorgeous piece of colouring I ever saw in nature.

On the south bank are good houses belonging to various Government officials, and still higher up and on the north bank are the bungalows built by the Maharája for the use entirely of English visitors, who have them rent free, subject only to certain conditions.

Here we landed at five o'clock, and our boatmen took us to see some of the houses and choose which we would have, for nearly all are now empty. We finally chose a set of rooms in

what is called the Barracks—not so dignified a title as a bungalow, but then the Barracks actually have six small panes of glass in each door, so that you can shut up your room without being in total darkness, the only alternative in the bungalows. We are extremely glad that we did so decide, for the weather changed the very day we came, and in the morning the mountains were covered with snow that had fallen in the night. Since then it has been cold and rainy —the first rain here for six months we are told.

We keep a fire burning, and with the doors shut (that is to say, shut as well as they will shut, a gap of an inch or two not counting for anything in this country), we manage to be comfortable enough. I cannot think what people do to keep warm in the bungalows; perhaps, being in the dark, they go to bed and stay there.

The next day we took a small boat, and went down to the fourth bridge, an hour's good quick paddle. There we landed and went to

look at the silversmiths' work; there are only three silversmiths, and they all live in a large square opening out from a labyrinth of steep, narrow, disgusting streets, as bad as any in Naples.

Our boatmen escorted us and liberally cuffed anyone who was too curious or pertinacious in following us; they took us to the shops, accompanied us upstairs, and stayed in the most matter-of-fact way while we were inspecting the things. How odd it would be if a London cabman accompanied one into Emanuel's shop and offered his advice or showed his interest in one's purchases!

The work is very beautiful, and most of the shapes extremely elegant, but I cannot bring myself to admire a very favourite pattern on the model of the kâng or native brazier; it seems to me to be as beautiful as a coal-scuttle, and though I can fancy getting one as a model, it seems to me a singular taste to admire the shape in a teapot. Another favourite pattern, the model of the common native chirâgh or oil lamp, I think

charming ; but indeed I admire all the genuine native shapes excepting that of the kâng, which looks as if it had been crushed out of shape on one side by some heavy blow.

We went to all three silversmiths and compared their work, and on the whole I think we admired Kaddu's things the most. We then went up some narrow grimy stairs to see the famous *papier mâché* work, and saw the men at work, grinding their colours, painting, and varnishing. The price of the work depends on its fineness, and some of it is extremely delicate and of lovely design. The man showed us an order of 100 Rs. worth for the Prince of Wales. Everyone who buys anything at these shops writes in a book what things he has bought, what their description is, or weight in silver, and what he has paid or agreed to pay for them. Some of the men have orders for hundreds of pounds' worth at a time, yet they live in little mean, dirty, wretched-looking houses, with their men at work on the first floor, and no attempt at attractive display of any sort. Their whole

stock is kept in boxes, and each separate thing taken out of its wrappings to show you, and carefully wrapped up and returned to the box as soon as you leave.

Srinagar, Oct. 21.—We went yesterday with Dr. Downes and Mr. R—— to see the wine manufactory set up by the Maharája many years ago under the management of a Frenchman, M. Ermand. It is situated on the shore of the Dal Lake, a beautiful sheet of water with mountains enclosing it, on whose slopes are the vineyards from which the wine is made. The day was cold and threatening, with the clouds so low that we could only see the lower part of the mountains. The grape season is quite over, so there was nothing to be seen of the wine-making; we went through the cellars, and Robert and the others tasted various clarets, brandies, and sparkling wines. Their praise seemed to me rather faint, but most of the wines are perhaps too new to be fairly criticised.

There is a huge still at work, and they make brandy from pears, apples, mulberries, and apri-

cots. If it can be made to pay, it should certainly pay under the present system, for we hear that the fruit is not paid for except when taken from the immediate neighbourhood, and that the wretched owners have into the bargain to bring it in gratuitously from their villages, often many days' march distant.

It is no doubt always difficult to know what reliance to place on what one hears in a new country, but some facts with regard to the Kashmir system of government are indisputable, and need only to be known to be condemned. It seems that a great part of the revenue is collected in kind, and in a way peculiarly objectionable, as affording so great an opportunity for extortion and oppression on the part of the collectors. Mr. R—— was travelling in Kashmir this summer, and, noticing that the barley crops were over-ripe and dropping the grain, he asked a villager why they did not cut them. 'Oh!' said the man, 'we cannot cut them until the Collector has been to see them and give permission.' 'What would happen if you were to cut

them without his permission?' 'We should be thrown into prison and our families ruined. We have to see the crop spoilt sometimes while we are waiting for the Collector's permission, but we dare not cut it.'

A week or so later Mr. R—— was returning by the same route; the weather had changed, and rain was threatening. The barley was all lying cut, but no attempt being made to carry it. On asking the reason he was again told that now it was cut the Collector must again see it and value it before it might be stacked.

This system would be a sufficient evil if the weather alone had to be considered; but when you think of the enormous power over the people that it puts into the hands of corrupt officials with itching palms, you may fancy how heavily it weighs on the wretched cultivator. A man, we will say, has a fine crop of corn ready to cut, and he knows that until he sends a bribe to the Collector he will not come to inspect the crop or give the necessary permission to cut it;

the bribe has of course to be sent, and, if insufficient, to be followed by a second.

Mr. R—— has seen a great deal of the country this year, and knows something of other native governments, and he says he never saw so bad and corrupt a system as in Kashmir. The people are crushed and helpless; they know that any attempt at seeking redress would only put them in a worse position than before, and that it is useless to try and amass a little wealth, for that would only mark them out for extortion and oppression.

This coincides with much that one has heard from others. It is said that the cause of the terrible famine here three years ago was the delay of the officials in giving permission for the crops to be cut, which in consequence spoilt as they stood. How patient and long-suffering the national character must be to bear all this without revolting! Mr. R—— says he believes the Kashmiris to have nearly every vice under the sun, but their cheerfulness and patience under trials are unfailing and wonderful, and

compel one's admiration. He thinks that the wretched state of things is owing chiefly to the want of sympathy between the governing classes and the people. The people are Mahommedan, their rulers Hindu, and between these two there seems to be an even wider gulf than between either of them and us Christians.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SOLOMON'S THRONE—THE DAL LAKE—FLOATING GARDENS—JACKDAWS' AMENS—AN EPICURE IN TOMBS—THE KORÂN EXPOUNDED—BY BOAT TO ISLÂMABAD—RUINS OF MÁRTAND.

Srinagar, Oct. 22.—We have been to see the copper work, which is precisely similar to that in silver—the shapes the same, and the chiselling quite equally fine. Like the silver, it is sold by weight. I wish English silversmiths made a practice of doing the same, as then you would know what the intrinsic value was of the thing you bought, and what the charge was for workmanship.

Afterwards we went to a shawl merchant's, and saw some of the famous Kashmir shawls, but steeled ourselves against being tempted by them. We bought, however, several rugs of beautiful design worked on what is called 'namda' or felt; it is the same material as is

used universally in India for saddle-cloths, and comes from Persia or Affghanistán. The original colours are white, brown, and black, and then the white ones are dyed red and many other colours; on them the designs are worked in coarse wool, and are thoroughly pure and Oriental. The only thing to be regretted is the use of magenta and one or two other European dyes, cheap and easy to use, but their introduction is fatal and much to be deplored.

The merchant offered us tea, which we gladly accepted, as we are too far from the city to run back for luncheon. The tea here is brought principally from Ladâkh, and is, I suppose, Chinese; it was brought in a samawár, which is a kind of urn containing a space down the centre in which charcoal is placed, so that the tea is kept boiling. I do not think the tea-leaves can be left in after being infused, as the colour of our second cups was no darker than the first. With it was handed a tray with dried apricots, sugar-biscuits, and apricot kernels; the biscuits are for sweetening the tea, which is

drunk without milk: you throw one into your cup and it dissolves entirely.

While Robert explored the bazaar further I went and sat in the boat and made a sketch of some boats that were moored on the opposite side; happening to turn my head, I found a row of young street-Arabs sitting on the lowest step, close by, watching me intently, but seeing that I had observed them they rose and fled precipitately, with an expression of comical terror.

Srinagar, Oct. 25.—Yesterday we went to the top of a hill called the Takht-i-Sulimân, or Solomon's Throne, which rises abruptly from the valley to a height of 1,000 feet, and has a small Hindu temple built on the very top, looking from below much like a pepper-caster. The ascent is very steep, being in many places up rough broken steps of unshaped stone. Robert walked and I went in a dandy. The path is extremely narrow, and the hill-side often precipitous, and as my bearers were not well-accustomed to the work and rather blundered along, I was not without nervousness lest I should be

Drawing water.
Nov. 5.
Srinagar.

tipped out. My walking ten yards was, however, out of the question, so I made a virtue of necessity, and sat in my dandy with an air of as much *sangfroid* as I could assume till we came to the last hundred feet, up which no dandy could be carried; so there I got out, and in course of time clambered up to the little ancient temple. Inside it is the sacred symbol of the Lingam, anointed with milk and ghee brought by the devout, and surrounded with flowers, while the air was heavy with the scent of some pastille burning in a niche.

I had thought that the practice of writing one's name on walls was confined to English and Americans, or to European nations. But here in this Hindu temple were thousands of Hindu autographs, and it is evidently the proper thing for any pious Hindu, who can write his name, to do so on these walls.

There is a splendid view over the whole valley, bounded by a semi-circle of beautiful jagged snow-covered mountains. The question must rise in every Englishman's mind, what

could have induced our Government to sell this beautiful country for a wretched three quarters of a million of money! It was little better as a bargain than Esau's mess of pottage.

In coming down again the weakness of my nerves prevailed against the weakness of my muscles, and I walked or hopped or dropped down the worst parts of the road, causing my knees to tremble all the rest of the day. In spring there are evidently quantities of wild flowers, but now all is withered and bare, and the hill-side nothing but masses of rock covered with dark velvety moss and beautiful lichens. Huge fragments have from time to time broken off and rolled down to the shore of the Dal Lake, where they lie piled in fantastic confusion.

The rock is peculiarly hard, the formation being trap, I believe, and can seldom be used for building, costing too much to cut into shape. Perhaps that is why hardly any steps or buildings are made of shaped blocks.

To-day we have been by boat to the Dal Lake, an hour and a half's paddle with six men

and a steerer—*i.e.* a woman at the stern with another paddle. We went up a small stream in which the water was exquisitely clear, and saw shoals upon shoals of minnows, and occasionally a good-sized fish was seen and speared by the man at the prow. The spear was a long slender pole, sometimes used for punting, and having at one end a circular bunch of small barbed prongs : the men are very clever in using it.

We passed by the Chenár Bâgh, or Garden of Chenárs ; and very beautiful the groups of these trees are—the grand trunks and limbs with their smooth milk-white bark looking now still whiter by contrast with the deep crimson and orange tints of the splendid foliage. The water of the lake was like glass, and the reflections of the mountains most beautiful and perfect ; in many places the water was covered with lotus leaves, and their bent stalks, with the reflections of them, made curious and graceful geometrical figures all over the surface, the reflection being so bright and strong that only by halving the figure could one tell where reality began and

ended. We went to Nishât Bâgh, a country house belonging to the Maharája ; it is on the shore of the lake and might be a villa on Como ; but if it were on Como it would have a decent landing place, and we should not have had to be punted by main force through thick mud till we reached some squashy land, where boards were thrown out for us to step on, and then picked up and again thrown in front of us till we reached firm ground. Of course this is only when the lake is low, as it is at this season, but still it would be easy, even then, to make some kind of landing place.

The grounds are very pretty, and in the spring evidently have a mountain stream rushing down some stone-built channels with fountains in numbers. Behind the gardens rise the hills quite abruptly—grand towering walls of rock. The old Mogal monarch who laid out the pleasure grounds showed very good taste in the situation he chose.

I was greatly disappointed in the *floating gardens*, for which the lake is celebrated and of

which I had often read. Without knowing anything about them, you would merely think they were flat marshy bits of ground, cultivated in some way—so that you need to know how curiously they are made before you see anything the least remarkable about them. It seems that one of the water plants in the lake has a habit of matting its root fibres very thickly together, and the natives take advantage of this by cutting off the stems below the matted part, thereby unmooring the matted plants; they then put brushwood and earth on to the floating mass, and moor it by stakes driven through and down into the mud. They grow melons and many vegetables very successfully on these floating earth-rafts, which are certainly very curious—but not to look at.

Srinagar, Sunday, Oct. 30.—We went to morning service to-day, which is held in the upper storey of an old native building in the Sheikh Bâgh, in the lower storey of which the English chaplain lives, in small quaintly fashioned highly ornamented rooms, with pretty

Moorish arches filled in only with lattice-work, but no glass. The upper room, in which service is held, has these arches round all four sides, and through the lattice you see the branches of the chenár trees quivering redly in the sun and wind ; the jackdaws held a service of their own outside, and their amens were loud and cheerful. Our congregation numbered ten, being the whole of the English now remaining. In another month the jackdaws will have it quite to themselves.

We afterwards went down the river in our boat (the congregation all came in boats), as it was a Mahommedan festival, and our men told us there would be a boat race at two o'clock. We loitered here and there, watching the washermen and women and the chattering crowd along the banks, and we waited patiently till past three o'clock, but never a sign of a race ; so we came home, getting up an impromptu race of our own with another boat manned like ours with six paddles. The excitement of both crews was great, and when at last we were

obviously losing, our men closed with the other boat, seizing the awning poles and trying to grapple with their paddles, their faces blazing with wrath and excitement. I quite feared they would come to blows; but I believe a Kashmiri uses his tongue rather than his fists; their powers of abuse would, I am told, quite silence a Billingsgate fishwoman. Sometimes two women will quarrel from opposite sides of the river, and scream and gesticulate and wag their heads in a most ludicrous manner.

Srinagar, Nov. 2.—I am writing on board our boat, moored by the shore of the Mânis Bal Lake, enjoying the warmth of the sun while protected from its direct rays by our mat roof. We started last night after dinner, and had a fine moonlight night for our voyage, but having a sore throat I went straight to bed, and so saw nothing of the moonlit city as we passed through it. We rowed more or less all night, and arrived here at nine o'clock this morning. This is a lovely little lake, said to be the prettiest in Kashmir, and just now its shores are most

beautiful with the brilliant red and yellow autumn tints on the little belt of trees near the water. Behind them rise low hills like Scotch moors, where good shooting is to be had, and in the far distance are the snow mountains.

On our arrival an old Fakír came with an offering of grapes and apples from his garden close by, and we have since been to pay him a visit. He lives in great comfort, for an ascetic, in a little house built by himself, as well as the mound on which it is raised, with the earth taken from a huge cave he has excavated in the hill. He began this cave intending it to be his place of burial, but he tells us the earth there is damp and he has changed his mind, and now wishes to be buried on the hill above, where he has made a tomb to please him.

This epicure in tombs has two wives and sundry children; he told us particularly that it was quite lawful—indeed very moderate—to have two wives, for the Korân permitted four. And he went on and expounded to us many of the tenets and prophecies of the Korân—about the

Kashmir Ayah in the "Feran"
Nov. 2. Manasbal Lake.
Our boatman washing his clothes.

six great Prophets, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mahommed, who are the rulers over a lakh and a half of minor prophets —about Mahommed's earthly wives, and his coming marriage, at the Resurrection, with the Virgin Mary and Pharaoh's daughter—and many other things we had not known before. He also told us that Mahommed when on earth had no shadow; he and Peter Schlemil are the only two I ever heard of as enjoying this distinction, though I do not feel sure about the Wandering Jew.

A little way up the hill are some grand chenár trees, whose smooth white bark has tempted travellers to cut their names; some of the inscriptions are quite works of art, entire regimental crests and badges being carved, sometimes with much skill. There is a cascade of water falling over the rocks, not far from our boats, which attracted our notice from looking so curiously like water that has been spilt and is trickling down as best it can; and on making inquiries we found that this is in fact the case, for though there is as much water as

in an ordinary mountain stream, and it never runs dry all the year round, yet it is only the overflow of a canal made some years ago, and would require probably a century before it could sufficiently wear a channel for itself to look natural.

Robert has bagged five brace of Chikór, but the walking is very hard. He says the hill is as well stocked as an ordinary grouse moor, and with four or five guns a capital bag could be made, but the birds are too wild and wary for one gun to do much.

Islâmabad, Nov. 10.—We left Srinagar on Monday, and for the last three days have been living in boats again, arriving here this morning. Between this and Srinagar the river winds immensely, and the nearly circular curves, which are so beautiful to look at from the Takht-i-Sulimân, and are said to have given the idea of the famous shawl pattern to the Kashmir workmen, are very tedious when journeying by boat. On the whole, we feel it to be a relief being on firm land once more, for we were kept in constant anxiety about fire, what with the stove at

night and our kerosine lamps standing on a rickety folding table which gave dreadful jumps when anyone put his foot on one of the loose planks forming the floor. One night we very nearly set the mat roof on fire, the heat of the lamp having charred one of the poles almost through when we noticed it; another ten minutes and we should have been in a blaze. The parrots, too, had their adventures, for their cage was hanging to a string that broke, and down they went into the river; I was sketching, but saw them fall and a man make a vain effort to catch them. The current was strong, but luckily swept the cage down within my reach, and I seized it as it was whirling by, bottom upmost, under the water. Poor polls! they had a narrow escape, and they coughed and sneezed for some time as it was, with the water down their throats. They are two that I picked up, one at Murree, the other at Srinagar, and are the beautiful slate-headed parrakeet, *P. schisticeps.*

We stopped on the way at Avantipûr, which now is only a small village, but was formerly the

capital of Kashmir. There is a fine ruin close by, supposed to be that of a Hindu temple, date unknown; the people say it was built in the days of the giants, and a man took up a potsherd and placed it on a stone to illustrate the ease with which the giants of old raised the huge stone blocks. Nearly every stone in the ruin is elaborately carved, and many columns and arches are still standing, though nearly all have been buried by the sands of time, and have only been excavated of late years.

There is one large heap of great blocks so complete and utter a ruin that one cannot even guess what form of building it was, and wonders what power it could have been that overthrew so totally these massive blocks.

But a much grander and more famous ruin is one we have been to see to-day—a six miles' ride from here—the ruins of a temple at Mártand, which has apparently been destroyed chiefly by human power, perhaps by the zealous Akbár when he conquered and devastated the country

towards the end of the sixteenth century. Much of it has resisted all the malice and violence of the Mahommedans, and stands in perfect strength and stateliness, although the stone blocks are shivered and cracked by the fire that has been used as a last attempt to destroy them. It must have been a magnificent temple, and makes one long to know more of the giants who built it.

It stands quite isolated on a bleak slope rising from some high table-land behind the town of Islâmabad; the ride was pretty, and quite flat except for the steep ascent from the low level to the high level. The history of the land seems from the face of it to have been, that many centuries ago the site of Islâmabad was covered with water forming a great lake extending to the steep high bank of the table-land. The table-land itself looks as if it had undoubtedly been the bed of a lake in bygone ages of the world; and if the temple of Mártand had been built in those days it would have been on the shores of the lake, on a level some 250 feet higher than that of the river Jhelum at the

present time. But perhaps geologists would say this would be too far back in the world's history to be the possible date of any building.

On our way back we went to see some tanks in Islâmabad, through which the clear waters of a mountain stream run, and which are full of tame fish. These ridiculous fish crowded to meet us, being accustomed to be fed by the Brahmans and visitors, and large pieces of bread thrown among them disappeared quicker than a fox when thrown to the hounds.

We have obtained permission from the Kashmir Government to leave the country by the Jammu route, and a chuprassie has been told off to escort us and provide us with coolies, ponies, and supplies. He swaggers about with his sword at his side in great style. We start to-morrow on our nine days' march to Jammu, and he has collected a crowd of coolies in readiness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

PRIMITIVE POST-OFFICE—MARCH TO JAMMU—BANIHÂL PASS—ROADS NOT MACADAMISED—THE LAST DEODÂRS—A WORM AND NO MAN—JAMMU—BENJAMIN'S MESS—AN UNPROPITIOUS START—SIÂLKÔT—COMMON LUXURIES—DITCHES IN LAHORE—INDO-GRECIAN SCULPTURE.

Islâmabad to Vernâg, Nov. 11.—Our march to-day took us over five hours, and was along a plain the whole way ; at first the plain was very wide, the mountains in the distance only looming faintly through the haze, but as we went on they gradually closed in and the scenery became very beautiful. Towards evening the colours were most glorious, the hills on the east of us glowing red in the setting sun, while those on the west were of every shade of cold blue, grey, and violet—in front of us the snow range, and the foreground gorgeous with a fiery belt of mulberry and chenár trees.

The road was little more than a cattle-track at the best, and often like the stony bed of a river. We incessantly crossed little rushing streams of clear water, and the plain was almost all one vast rice-field; wherever the ground was uncultivated it was covered with wild iris and southernwood, which seem to be the Kashmir substitutes for docks and nettles.

As we were leaving Islâmabad we wished to post some letters and told our men to show us the post-office; we rode out of the town without coming to it, and were wondering if the men had understood what we said — for Hindustani is quite a foreign language to the Kashmiris — when our pony-wallah suddenly stopped and said, 'Here is the post-office.' We could see nothing but some haystacks, but on looking more carefully we saw there was a sort of doorway between two of them, from which emerged a man with a sheet of postage stamps as a badge of office in his hand! And this was really the post-office of Islâmabad, the second largest town in Kashmir. We gave up our letters with doubting hearts,

after seeing the proper stamps cut off the sheet with a pair of scissors and stuck on the envelopes with some very dark messy gum produced from the recesses of the haystack.

We are here in a house belonging to the Maharája, a great rambling place with a very large octagonal tank, more than a hundred feet across, under our windows, filled with clear water of a deep blue which rises in the hill immediately behind the house, and passing through the tank falls in a beautiful cascade down into the river bed. This tank is famous for its tame fish, which are in such multitudes that when a handful of rice is thrown to them you see *nothing* but fish—no water, only a heaving, writhing mound of heads and backs and tails.

Vernâg to Banihâl, Nov. 12.—To-day we crossed the Banihâl Pass, over 9,000 feet. We had heard so much of its difficulties and of the snow we should find on the road that we were almost disappointed at finding no snow and meeting with no real difficulties. We both of us rode to the top of the pass, a fearful pull of two

hours or more; we have ridden up equally steep pitches, but only for a few hundred yards at a time, whereas this was for quite four miles as steep as would be possible for a pony to go. Towards the end we had to halt every ten yards to breathe our ponies; and more than once my pony, a strong willing beast, got a fore-foot on to the next ledge of rock and then stood still until he had collected sufficient breath and energy to make another effort. The road is fairly good altogether, but in places nothing but ledges of jagged rock; the hillside is covered with trees and underwood, not quite bare of leaves, and looking just like an English nutwood tilted up on end.

Carlie had to give up his doolie for to-day and make the march in a native litter, on account of the tremendous steepness of the hill. It was very much like a large butler's tray, gaily painted, and with two bamboos tied to its sides, for the men to carry on their shoulders; he had eight bearers and came along splendidly, quite as fast as we did on our ponies.

When we reached the top of the pass there was a bitter tearing wind, and we felt thankful there was no snow to increase the cold. On the south side of the hill, as is so often the case, there was neither tree nor shrub; the road descends very steeply, but is not rocky, only deep in black dust, which whirled about us in dense clouds, filling our eyes and ears, and making us glad to get down as fast as possible; once down in the valley our road was nearly level—a great relief to both man and beast. We stopped to rest in a little village, where an old fakír, who was sitting in an open space on a raised earthen daïs with his white flag stuck up beside him, brought us milk and honey. The honey we declined, having no bread to eat with it, but the milk we gratefully accepted.

The rest-house here is truly native in construction and very draughty; the window frames are arched, and filled in only with lattice-work of endless geometrical designs. The lower part, certainly, has solid wooden shutters, but there is no means of closing the upper arched part, and

cold gales curl round us on every side. I do not know how we should keep warm at all but for our kángris, small earthen pots enclosed in wickerwork; these are filled with hot wood ashes, which will remain alive all day, and you stand the kángri under your petticoats or under a rug spread over your knees, when the heat soon becomes almost unbearable. Every Kashmiri carries his kángri with him, and they are so cheap as to be within the reach of the poorest; threepence is the price of a common one, and ornamental ones like ours are from sixpence to ninepence. They certainly are necessities in this unglazed country. A well-known guide-book to Kashmir tells us that the roads are not macadamised—a fact certainly confirmed by our own experience. It might have been added that the windows are not filled with plate glass.

Banihâl to Râmsu, Nov. 13.—Our march today has been through very pretty scenery, and this rest-house of Râmsu is most romantically placed—on the hillside of a lovely narrow wooded

valley with very precipitous sides and a large brawling stream rushing through it. The road has been a trying one for the men, having long steep ascents, with other shorter ones of still greater steepness.

The route we are now taking is not one of those authorised for visitors, and very few people travel by it, as a special 'parwâna' or pass is required from the Durbar and is rarely applied for. We have met with the greatest civility and courtesy from the officials and headmen; but we hear this is by no means always the case, and stories have reached us of travellers being brought almost to a stand—their coolies running away and leaving the baggage strewn about the road, and the village headmen refusing to give any help. This is not likely to be our fate, for, besides our swaggering orderly and his sword, we have now another official in gorgeous puggri of crimson and gold who professes his intention of accompanying us to Jammu. His private reason for so doing is, I fancy, to levy the commission on our coolies' wretched wages, one-

eighth of which is daily looted by the Government officials ; it is a cruel thing, but we cannot interfere, as it is a recognised custom of this oppressed country.

I have been much struck with the curious relative sizes of the cattle and the goats in Kashmir : the cattle are so small and the goats so large that a six months' calf is just the size of a milch goat.

Râmsu to Râmban, Nov. 14 : 15 miles.—The road to-day has been through magnificent scenery. For some time it lay through a narrow gorge enclosed by precipitous hills 2,000 feet high, covered with dry tawny grass, which was a splendid orange red in the sunlight and made a glorious background for the dark pine-trees which grew everywhere. Our path was bordered on one hand by solid granite rocks from which fine monoliths might be cut, and in every cranny of which was a fringe of maidenhair, while on the other was the foaming stream whose bed was strewn with giant boulders bleached white by sun and raging waters—with

here and there one that had held its head above water long enough to have earned the distinction of a velvet cap of moss and lichen. For many hours we followed the course of the stream, but sometimes at its level, sometimes 1,000 feet above it, with an almost sheer precipice between us. The road was narrow and guileless of railing, but generally good, and everywhere safe for a pony, which we had not expected it to be.

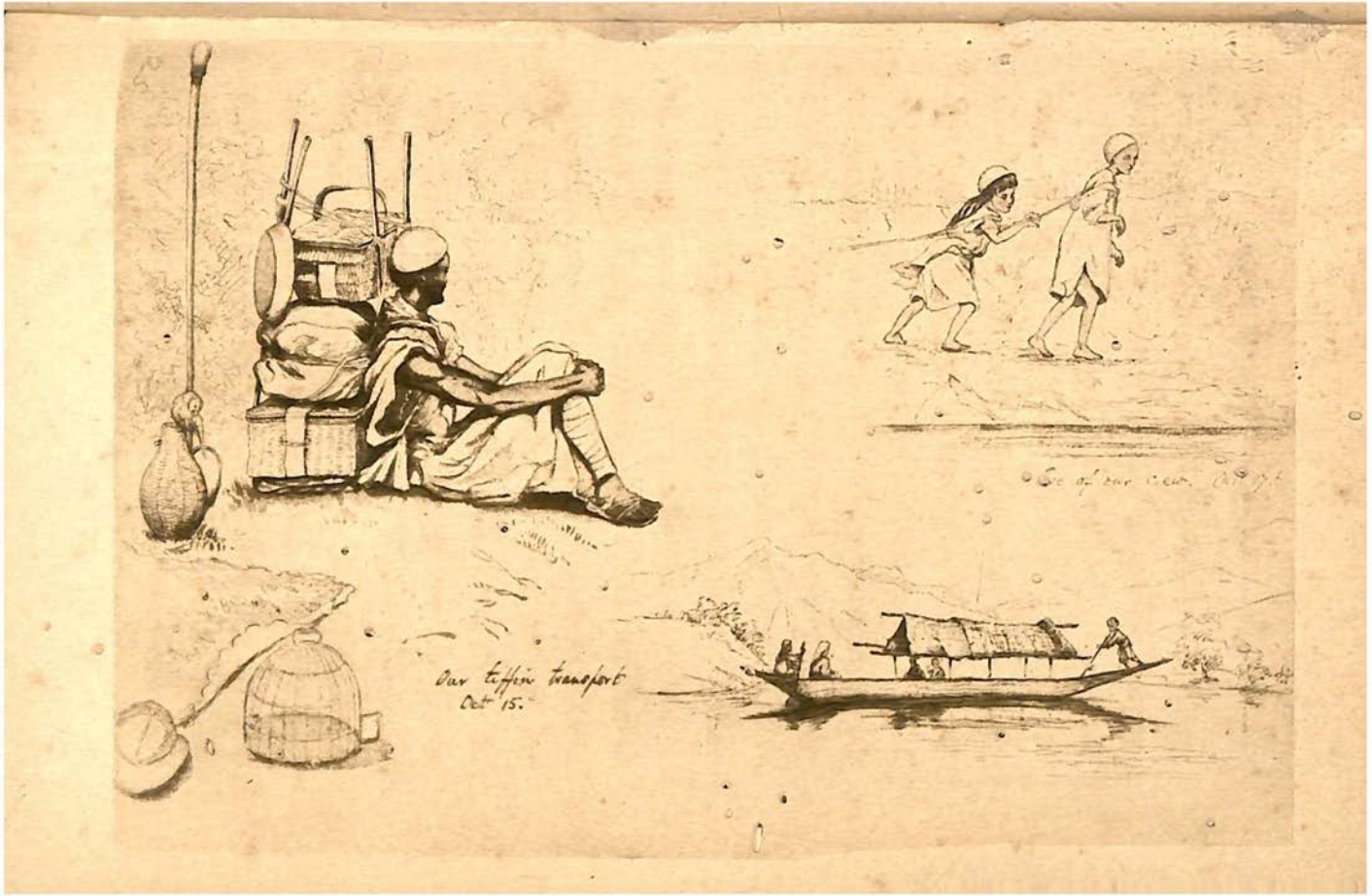
We made our mid-day halt in a theatrically-arranged glen, forming a *cul de sac* of high perpendicular rocks curtained with maidenhair, into which a stream of water fell from a great height.

Soon after starting again we came to the junction of our pretty stream with the river Chenâb, a grand volume of sea-green water of icy coldness, and our road then followed the Chenâb valley till we reached the rest-house of Râmban. We find the climate perceptibly changing, and to-day we have noticed a great change in the vegetation, having seen castor-oil plants, cotton-trees, oleanders, and other familiar

trees of the plains. The beautiful chenár trees are left behind on the other side of the Banihâl Pass.

Râmban to Batôti, Nov. 15: 13 miles.—This does not sound much of a day's work, but it took us five hours, and the baggage coolies ten. About three miles after starting we crossed to the right bank of the Chenâb by a very rickety and dangerous-looking suspension-bridge, and very glad we were to leave the sunny side of the valley, for the sun again begins to get hot.

After riding for three hours we halted as usual, but, the coolie with the luncheon things not turning up during the two hours we stopped, we had to start again after a frugal luncheon of some biscuits we luckily had with us and some milk we bought from the villagers. The last hour and a half was one long stiff pull, which brought us to the crest of a mountain-range covered with deodâr trees, and here we found a tent had been pitched for us, as there is no rest-house. The servants pitched our own tent, and crowded into it for the night; but our


Our tiffin transport
Oct 15.

kitchen was under a grand old deodâr, and the dinner was cooked by the light of some pine-wood torches which flame brilliantly.

The scenery is very fine, and as night fell we had a splendid illumination in the distance, where a whole mountain-side was on fire. These fires are not uncommon, and most of the older pine-trees show signs of having been scathed by flame at some time of their life.

Batôti to Dharmtala, Nov. 16: 12 miles.—The road lay over a mountain of probably 7,000 or 8,000 feet, judging by the ferns we found, and the beautiful deodârs, which made a forest some miles in length. We gradually left them behind as we descended the mountain-side, and those are probably the last deodârs we shall ever see growing wild: they are very different-looking from the graceful limp-topped specimens on our English lawns, the older ones being often flat-topped and more like cedars in their growth.

The latter part of our march was very bad—frightfully stony, and with steep short pitches; in many places it was simply like riding down a

rough flight of stairs. However, we rode confidently down, the reins knotted on the ponies' necks, so that they went where and how they chose. It certainly destroys much of a horse's sense and instinct to guide him so entirely by the reins as we do, and I do not believe that any English-bred or English-educated pony would go over these roads, overladen as these little creatures always are, without ever making a fault or stumble. I often saw my pony, on coming to a worse flight of steps than usual, look over two tracks and hesitate, then decide which he thought best and follow it with almost human sagacity and caution.

When we got in this evening we had the ponies all fed in our presence, and only wish we had thought of doing so before, as I feel certain they have not had the corn they are supposed to get.

Two villagers suffering from toothache came to ask us for medicine, and as, fortunately, I always carry a bottle of Bunter's Nervine with me, I was able to doctor them, with the help of

some cotton wool and a long sharp splinter of wood. Their pain was relieved almost instantly, and, the fame of this medicine spreading, another poor fellow came presently with his face swollen, and evidently in agony; but on looking into his mouth I saw I could do nothing,—for a more splendid, perfect set of teeth I never saw, without a speck on one of them. I suppose there must have been inflammation at the root of one, but the poor man's face was most pathetic when he heard that I could do nothing for him.

Dharmtala to Adampúr, Nov. 17: 13 miles.—After the first three miles the road has been a nearly perfect level. It was originally intended for a canal, but, the water declining to run in its new bed, the work had to be given up; the labour, however, was not in vain, for it has resulted in some miles of the best road in Kashmir. You must recollect that the Kashmiris do not feel the need of any good road, as there is no wheeled vehicle in the whole country; so all they want is a track along which their shoeless sure-footed ponies and bullocks can go.

The scenery to-day has entirely changed its character, the hills getting lower and widening out till we came to quite open country. There is no rest-house at this place, but we found a good tent pitched for us under a large Bargat or Banian-tree, another reminder of how rapidly we are nearing the plains.

Adampúr seems to be a place of some importance, and on our arrival quite a crowd of officials in white garments and pink, gold-striped, or blue puggris, came out to receive Robert, who is treated with almost as great attention as if he were travelling in his own district. I cannot say I like the looks of the Kashmir officials; they have a dissipated, rascally air about them, which I fear does not belie their character.

Adampúr to Dhansâl, Nov. 18: 12 miles.—A very pretty march to-day, through varied country with many stiff ups and downs, and many flights of steps for the ponies, but mostly good ones, tolerably wide and shallow. We had to cross a range of low hills, and on reaching the crest the view was like the Doon from Mussoorie on a

small scale; we could see Jammu in the far distance, and to-morrow's march, across this broken plain, will be our last one, much to our regret.

Jammu, Nov. 20.—Our marching is over, and we are thoroughly enjoying a rest and a return to some of the ordinary comforts of civilization—such as rooms lighted actually with glass windows, and crockery instead of iron plates to eat off.

Yesterday's march was fourteen miles, and lay mostly through some curiously broken country full of the most striking evidences of some tremendous convulsion of Nature; its strata is thrown up at every possible angle, a ridge of rock often rising at a steep slope for many hundreds of yards, and then ending abruptly in a sheer precipice—the strata all snapped off short. At one time my dandy-bearers took me by a different route to the one Robert and the others went, and for more than an hour I was quite alone in this strange scenery and its utter solitude; a feeling of deep

depression came over me, as it has done before when by accident I once found myself alone in these great hills. It makes one feel—not so much, as David did, that one 'is a worm and no man'—but that a worm and a man are absolutely equal in insignificance when in presence of such mighty evidences of the forces of Nature and the countless ages of Time.

To own with our lips that we are worms costs us nothing—but to *feel* it in one's own heart is a thing that can rarely happen, and not to many, and is painful and depressing. However, I presently rejoined Robert—and the sight of the luncheon-basket, and the company of my fellow-men, quite restored my comfortable feeling of being more important than the worm.

The cactus-trees were a striking feature of the country, some of them being twenty feet high, with spreading heads and quite large trunks—more like very old dwarfed olive-trees than anything else in effect. Many of the hills were of unbroken sandstone rock up to the very summit—smooth, rolling, dark grey slopes, with

grass and pine-trees growing in the hollows where a little soil had been able to lodge. A little mountain stream which we followed for some time had worn for itself a stone trough, with deep falls from one basin to another, and at every sharp curve had by its furious chafing worn a large smooth cave into which the water must surge gloriously when the stream is in flood.

Jammu is built on the high bank of a river, and we had a long steep ascent to the town up a paved street with shallow steps, slippery and trying to the ponies. At the top we came to the bazaar, a very long one with low one-storied shops on either side, the columns of the verandahs daubed with coarse red and green, no doubt last renewed for the Prince of Wales's visit in 1876. The street at first was wide, but grew narrower and yet more narrow till we had to ride in single file—and at that point we met some laden camels! Luckily their loads were so high up that our legs passed safely below them, and our ponies took no more notice of the camels

than they would of donkeys. Then a great Brahminy bull came stalking majestically through the crowded street, and I patted his fat back as he went by; no one paid him any attention and he noticed no one.

We went to the post-office and got seventeen newspapers besides a great budget of letters; it is nineteen days since we have heard a word of the outer world, but no kings or emperors seem to have been made or unmade during the time.

We are here as guests of the Maharája, in one of his houses, and with true Oriental hospitality he feeds us and all our servants during our sojourn in his capital.

Siâlkôt, Nov. 22.—The day after we reached Jammu the Resident of Srinagar arrived, and we had much amusement in watching the preparations for the reception of a man whom the king delighteth to honour. Among other things came a train of fourteen men, each carrying eight large earthen pots slung on a pole, and these we found contained sweetmeats sent by the Maha-

rája. The principle on which Benjamin's portion was five times greater than his brethren's is still active in the East; I do not suppose Benjamin was able to eat his mess any more than the Resident can eat his 112 jars of sweetmeats, but the intention of doing honour is the same in both cases.

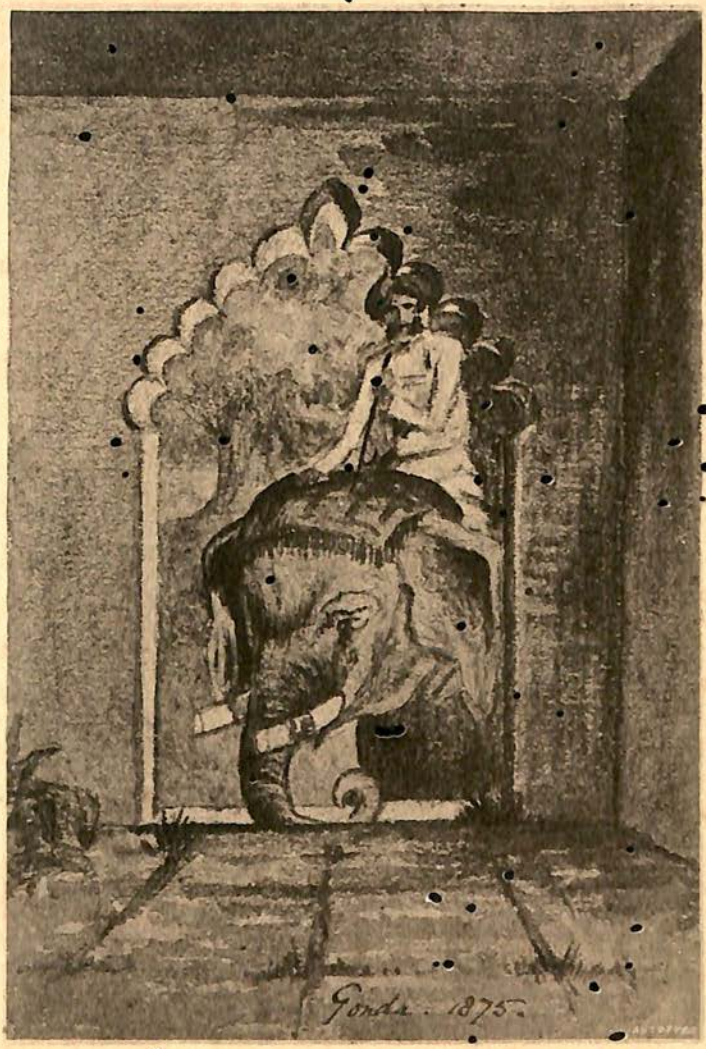
In the afternoon we rode through the city on an elephant, taking Carlie with us, who was delighted at being mounted so high. We were in a howdah, which is not nearly as comfortable as a pad, but much more honourable. It raised us very high indeed, so that we were far above the low one-storied houses and obtained a curious view of an expanse of flat mud roofs, looking more like a great fallow field than the housetops of a large town. We went to see the so-called Wonder-House—a name generally applied to a museum—but in this instance given, I believe, on account of the marvellous shortness of the time in which the building was completed, something like three months, I believe. The rooms are very fine and large, and furnished entirely in European

fashion. The largest of all is a really splendid room, 180 feet by 60; it is unfurnished and used for Durbars.

The Fort of Jammu is an imposing-looking building on the opposite bank of the river to the town; its white towers rise from amidst a mass of trees, and the hills behind it are wooded as far as the eye can reach. It is lovely and not unlike Heidelberg.

I was anxious to go and see the Maharája's dogs, of which he keeps between two and three hundred. They are of every breed—some of them fine wolf-like hounds for hunting boars, which we saw on the night of our arrival being taken out for a walk in lots of five or six, each with a chain. The kennels, however, were too far off, and our elephant not a swift beast, so we had to give up the idea of going.

This morning we left Jammu for Siâlkôt, starting on an elephant, which took us down to the river, and to the opposite bank, where the carriage road to Siâlkôt begins. There we dismounted from the lordly beast and put ourselves


Gonda. 1875.

into the humble dâk ghâri—the first thing we had seen on wheels for seven weeks, since in fact we were turned out at the thirty-eighth mile-post at Murree. The road was terribly sandy and heavy, and our start was not a propitious one; the horses jerked and plunged till a trace broke, and after that had been mended one of them took to kicking, and kicked till she got both legs over the pole. We then all got out, and the pole was taken out, but she seemed possessed, and kicked again till she got one leg behind the splinter bar, and there seemed no hope of getting her out without breaking her leg. It was a piteous scene, the poor frightened thing trembling and screaming as I never heard horse scream, while Robert and a crowd of men were doing their best to save her. Carlie burst out crying from sympathy, so I led him away up the road, and at last the poor mare was got out safely, by means of putting the pole under her and hoisting it up by a lot of men till she was fairly lifted over the bar.

After this excitement we had a fresh pair of

horses put in—strong hill ponies—and met with no further adventure. The jolting over the rough boulders beneath the sand was terrific, and made the framework crack and groan. Carlie thought it capital fun.

It is about twenty-seven miles to Siâlkôt, and we crossed into English territory when half way. The immediate change in the look of the country was very noticeable; the roadside was planted with trees and had a well-cared-for look quite new to our eyes; the land was all cultivated, and there was an air of neatness and prosperity over it that could not fail to strike the most careless traveller. It was so different from anything we have seen while travelling in Kashmir.

The dâk bungalow, too, here at Siâlkôt seems like a fine hotel to us, and it is perfect luxury to have glass windows, and *doors with handles to them* and which really shut. I have sometimes heard a person say that he would like to be put back into the days of the barons; I shall tell any such person in future that he cannot do better than go to Kashmir for a few

months. He will not only spend some very enjoyable months, but he will in many ways realise the style of life led in the Middle Ages, and after the novelty has worn off will, I prophesy, be heartily glad to go back to a country where made roads, wheeled carriages, glass windows, kerosine lamps, wooden floors, and well-fitting doors are to be had—not to mention nice crockery and glass, and tables that will not fall, and chairs that may be sat on without special precaution. This is the first time in my life that I have appreciated these common and till now unnoticed comforts.

Lahore, Nov. 25.—From Siâlkôt we went by dâk ghâri to Wazírabad, where we found ourselves once more on the railway and plunged fairly back into the end of the nineteenth century. We took a drive yesterday through the native city here; but driving in Lahore is scarcely a delight, as the street is crossed every twenty yards or so by an open drain or ditch—and as time after time our fore wheels stuck fast and were only got out by a fearful jerk, our feelings were

not benedictory towards the municipal council, who make a broad specious road up to the city gate as far as the 'sahibs' are likely to drive, and then allow the streets of the city to remain absolutely unfit for any wheeled carriage.

But for the ditches, we enjoyed driving through the bazaars, and seeing all the artisans at work—hammering iron, embroidering shawls, engraving brass, setting jewels, fashioning trinkets, coats, baskets—everything, in short, that is made being made in the open air before your eyes. It is such a cheerful, busy scene, and no one looks hardworked or worn with care as they do in Europe: life is not lived here at such a pace.

We afterwards went to see the tomb of Ranjît Sing, the old Lion of the North—where under a canopy of white marble in the centre of the great building is a monument containing the ashes of the old warrior king and those of his wives who burnt themselves on his funeral pyre. A small raised ball is carved in memory of each wretched woman; four ornamental ones for the

four wives, and six plain ones for the six concubines who then underwent martyrdom. In the fort of Lahore is a large and most interesting collection of arms taken from the Sikhs—chain armour, brass skull-caps, steel arm-pieces with long swords to them, curious old matchlocks of all lengths, a huge steel mace that would need a giant to wield it, swords of wonderful workmanship, pistols, drums, knives of deadly and horrible shapes, and a toy cannon that belonged to Dhuleep Sing.

There is a Zoo, or Bird-house as the natives call it, where there is a fine tiger, a wild ass, a cassowary, and a fair collection of birds and animals, who are all well cared for and look as happy as poor wretches in confinement can. The tiger looked at us with magnificent scorn and hatred, his expression showing clearly what cowards he thought us to come and mock him in his helplessness.

To-day we have been to see the museum, where specimens are shown of all the arts and manufactures of the Punjáb, Kashmír, and the

neighbouring provinces. There are some fine antique sculptures that have been found near Pesháwar, and which show a far greater skill in modelling the human figure than any Hindu sculptures I have hitherto seen. They are called Indo-Grecian, and certainly look more Grecian than Hindu—but how did Grecian art take root in the Punjáb? Alexander was not likely to carry about sculptors with his army, nor to leave them behind when he left, even if he ever came as far east as Pesháwar. There is to be further search for antiquities in the Pesháwar district; it will be most interesting work, and with every likelihood of being splendidly rewarded.

Our pleasant holiday is now over, for Robert's leave ends to-morrow, and we leave this evening for Sahâranpúr.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HORSE-BREEDING IN BENGAL—DRIVE TO HURDWÂR—SOLÂNI AQUEDUCT—A CURIOUS RAFT—SELLING OFF—HÛLI FESTIVAL—INFATUATED SPARROW—START FOR BOMBAY—FÊTE AT JAIPÚR—AHMEDABAD—JAIN TEMPLE—SLAUGHTER OF PARRAKEETS—BOMBAY—NO PUNKAHS.

Sahâranpúr, Saturday, Nov. 26.—Exactly eight weeks since the day we started from here—a very different party from the one turned out on the platform this morning at 9 o'clock—for we are all now in robust health. We have most thoroughly enjoyed our holiday, and have laid up many pleasant and amusing memories for future days; still, it is very delightful being at home again, and the house seems so large, and clean, and comfortable, and the rooms so light that it is a positive pleasure even being able to see the dust on one's clothes! a luxury I could never enjoy in Kashmir, as I could not dress with the

door wide open, and therefore dressed in a very dim light, often indeed with a candle. The fawn and the oriole and all my birds are quite flourishing, and seemed very glad to see me, especially the oriole, who flew wildly at me and clung to my neck; for some time he would not stir from me, but is now flitting happily about the garden.

Dec. 21.—Horse-breeding in Bengal was under discussion the other night, and some curious facts were mentioned which are strong confirmations of Darwin's theory that if attempts are made to breed animals in a country unsuited to them they will presently, in spite of all care, revert to the type naturally suited to the climate. Now Bengal is *par excellence* the land of horned cattle, and the superintendent of the stud here, a great authority on such matters, and Dr. ——, who has been much in Bengal, were saying how hopeless it is to keep a good breed of horses there. They said that in some instances they had even known horses to have had *rudimentary horns and cloven feet!* Had they not been speaking in sober earnest, and one of them at least

Bhatiari women collecting dry leaves. Dec. 12.

A Bhatiárin
Dec. 12. 1881.

been a high authority on such a question, it would be difficult to believe such a fact as that a horse's descendants should, in the lifetime of one man, show a tendency to become cows!

I believe that people who keep an English breed of dogs out here find it impossible to prevent the type from altering, as the noses especially have a tendency to sharpen and lengthen, after the fashion of the wolfish dog of the country. What strange possibilities such a theory opens out!

Dec. 31.—We have just returned after spending a few days in camp with the Collector and his wife at Hurdwâr—a place where the Ganges emerges from the hills, and exchanges its merry mountain life for the monotonous one of the plains. We were to have spent Christmas with them, and horses were laid out and all arrangements made for our going on the 24th, but I got a bad attack of fever and ague the day before which kept me in bed two days. However, on the 26th I got up, still very shaky, and we started by dâk ghâri for Roorkee, twenty-eight miles; there we were met by a large covered

waggonette belonging to the Râni of Landaura, a most estimable neighbour, who never uses it herself, and appears to keep it for the use of the Collector and his friends.

We then had a drive of twenty miles along the bank of the Ganges Canal, a magnificent piece of engineering. Soon after leaving Roorkee it crosses at right angles a large river, and is carried over in a gigantic aqueduct more than a hundred feet in width, and at a height of fifty feet above the river. It has a most curious effect seeing these two bodies of water crossing at right angles. The carriage-way over the great Solâni aqueduct is not a pleasant one for nervous people; it is only just wide enough for one carriage to go along it, and has only a low iron railing between it and the deep canal on one hand, and the sheer fifty feet drop on the other. It is quite a quarter of a mile long, and most people prefer going over on their own feet. I should have preferred it too, but that being quite a *last* resource with me, I sat in the carriage and tried to look as if I liked it.

A little farther on the canal again crosses two rivers, but goes *under* instead of over them. The river beds are now dry, but when full of water it must be a curious sight to see a wide river flowing across an equally wide and much deeper river below. When the Ganges Canal was first planned the Brahmins were horror-struck at the wicked impiety of such an idea; but when they saw the sacrilegious work actually in progress they preached comfort to the outraged Hindus by assuring them that the holy Ganges would never, never, never consent to flow in so profane a channel. I believe they really believed what they said, and it must have been a severe shock to them when the sluice-gates were opened and the great Ganga showed itself obedient to the English engineers by flowing where they wished, and behaving itself in all things as a common river might do that was neither sacred nor miraculous.

Our second pair of horses provided us with some excitement, doing anything rather than start—until, at a moment when Robert and all

hands were down helping to turn the wheels, they suddenly started at a gallop, with Robert and the servants flying along behind, till one by one they climbed into the carriage. It is a very pretty drive, and as you near Hurdwâr and come in sight of the Siwâlik hills the scenery is lovely.

The camp was a large one, as one or two Canal and Forest officers were also there. I much enjoyed getting a few days of camp-life again before leaving India—never to return.

Hurdwâr is the most sacred spot in India to Hindus, and once a year pilgrims from all parts of India flock to it. Once in twelve years is a year of special sanctity, known as the Kûmb year, and then the numbers of pilgrims are enormous. The last Kûmb-Mêla was in 1879, when it was calculated that between two and three millions of pilgrims bathed on the great bathing day. You can fancy the arrangements required for controlling such a crowd, especially as the sacred Bathing Ghaut is only perhaps fifty feet in width, and approached by a very narrow street,

and all the pilgrims must bathe there and there only, and all between certain hours prescribed by the Brahmins and determined by the stars.

The street of Hurdwâr is irregular, narrow, and very picturesque; but the river-bank, as seen from an island opposite, is the most striking view—one long line of temples and ghauts, backed by the red hills that rise abruptly behind them. In these hills are caves and temples excavated in the rock, and I should much like to have seen them, but was unable. I got a sketch of a curious-looking thing, peculiar, I believe, to Hurdwâr; it is called a Sarnāi, and is simply a charpoy or common native bedstead tied across two inflated buffalo-skins, and is used as a light raft. Two men on two other inflated skins act as postilions or steerers by swimming along by the side and guiding it as it floats down the river; it is rather exciting in the rapids, I am told, and I longed to try it, but had no opportunity. When the voyage down is finished, the boatman takes out his raft and carries it up to the starting-point again on his

head; the skins look like uncouth deformed monsters, and the whole apparition is one at which the stoutest-hearted horse might excusably shy.

Sahâranpûr, March 6, 1882.—A long gap in my diary, filled by quiet uneventful weeks—the calm before the rapids. Just now we are in mid-stream, and over our ears in confusion and work—packing our own things to go home, and packing those which have been sold to other people to be scattered north, south, east, and west. Some of the familiar old things feel to me like friends, and as they leave, shrouded in cloth and tow, to go among strangers, I wonder what their new surroundings will be. My writing-table, whose every drawer was sacred to home letters or some dear familiar rubbish, has had to give up everything but the scent of the melilot that still pervades it and go to a new home. The packing has been very heavy, but is nearly over now, and a sale will get rid of all that remains.

Yesterday was our last Sunday in an Indian

Dec 27. Hardwar.
On a carnac - floating down the Ganges?

home, and it happened to be the Hindu festival of the Hûli, which the lower Hindus keep in much the same fashion as the lower Christians keep, or used to keep, Christmas—by getting gloriously drunk. As a rule they take care to get drunk only at seasonable hours, when it will not interfere with their work, but yesterday our men behaved very badly; when the time came for afternoon service we sent to order the brougham to be brought round—but after some delay a message was brought that the brougham was ready, but that there was no one to drive it, both coachman and syce being dead-drunk. The coachman had attempted to mount the box, but had tumbled off, luckily before he could take the reins, while the syce could not even rise. This morning they are all very penitent and working with a will. The bearer apologised, saying he only got drunk once a year—evidently thinking that a thing done so seldom should then be done thoroughly.

There was nearly being a tremendous fight between the Faithful and the Heathen this Hûli.

It seems that a Hindu, who should have been an Irishman, conceived a plan for insulting the Mahommedans, and paraded the streets dressed in green (the religious colour of the Mahommedans), with a Korân slung round his neck, and a woman capering by his side, while he kept on shouting that he was the Prophet and this was his wife. The Mahommedans were infuriated, and with good reason; they seized the wretch, and, behaving far better than Irishmen in such circumstances would, dragged him before the magistrate. How the matter ended I do not know, but I should be glad to hear they had ducked the prophet in the river. It was an insult that was likely enough to have cost many lives.

Jaipúr, March 13.—We finally left our house on Thursday last, going for the last two days to a hotel, in order to have the house cleared for the auction sale on Saturday. Over the chimneypiece at the hotel was a mirror, and there was an infatuated sparrow that, Narcissus-like, was enamoured of his own image, and from

morning till evening, and again till morning, remained before this mirror; I think he would have died of starvation but that visitors scattered crumbs on the mantelshelf. During the two days we stayed there the bird was never absent, and a visitor who had been for more than a week at the hotel said it had been the same during his whole stay.

On Saturday we finally left Saháranpúr, and started with the fawn and nine parrots on our long railway journey to Bombay—making our first break at Jaipúr, after eighteen hours. Having been here before, we are only making a short halt, and leave again this evening for Ahmedabad.

This afternoon we went to the public gardens, which are most beautifully kept up, the turf surpassing in extent and greenness any I have seen in India. Some fête was going on, and a brighter, gayer, happier scene there could not be. There were crowds of natives, men and women in quite equal proportions, which is not common. Most of them were in gala dress, the

women's chudders being red, pink, green, or yellow; and the effect was most brilliant. Everyone was doing what seemed to him good—groups of women clustered on the grass like flower clumps, singing gaily some merry shrill chaunt; children, some gaily dressed, others nearly naked, all playing together and rolling down a grassy bank; men and children crowding the merry-go-round, all bright and joyous-looking, and as orderly and well-behaved as the most aristocratic crowd could be. It was a scene never witnessed in the public gardens under English rule.

There is a really magnificent fern-house, so damp and cool and green as to be a pleasure merely to enter in this hot and thirsty land; the orchids and the banks of maidenhair looked as luxuriant as if they were by a Himalayan stream. In the zoological collection is a monkey that exceeds in hideousness all other monkeys I ever saw; but we could not find out his scientific name. He is a large beast with a snout like a pig's—not the least like the usual facial

angle of the monkey tribe—and on his shoulders he has a cape of long hair exactly like those worn by some savage South Sea islanders. He had a large circle of admirers (?), and was graciously accepting small offerings of fruit and sweetmeats.

Ahmedabad, March 15.—We left Jaipúr in the evening, and then had twenty-five hours' rail to this place: it was terribly hot in the daytime, going up to 98° in our carriage. It was wonderful to see hollyhocks blooming splendidly at the railway stations: they do not seem to mind the heat so long as they get plenty of water. The country through which we passed was for the most part bare and burnt up, but got much greener as we approached Ahmedabad; in places it then looked almost English, with nice large ponds of water, and fields divided by green hedges—of cactus certainly, but still the effect was homelike. In Rájputána it is all a rocky plain, and the river beds—like one near Cannes—are much in need of being watered. We saw flocks of peafowl, evidently very tame, as

most birds are in India when unmolested by the English.

I perhaps never saw birds so tame and bold as they are here; wild parrots swarm, and several have actually come on to my birds' cages to inspect them. The natives in the city hang out little trays with food on them on purpose for the parrots, and also put up things like dove-cotes of beautifully carved wood, where they regularly feed the wild pigeons and parrots.

We went to see the Jamma Masjid to-day, and it was a curious sight to see the crowds of blue-rock pigeons and parrots fluttering in and out, while the squirrels were so tame as hardly to get out of our way, and several large Langour monkeys were sitting sociably on some beautiful carved stonework running round the inside of a dome. Some baby monkeys were playing hide-and-seek behind the stone latticework, and made us laugh by poking their absurd little black faces and white whiskers through a small gap in the tracery.

The Jamma Masjid, like many other Mahom-

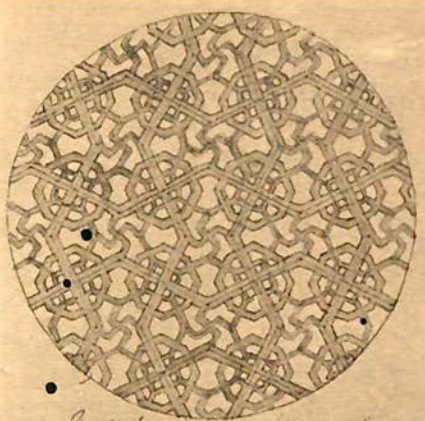
medan buildings, is a fine specimen of purely Hindu architecture; the mosque has many domes and is supported by a forest of graceful columns, said to number nearly four hundred. They are very simple in construction, each being formed by a double transition from a square to a circle through the intermediate octagon and hexadecagon; they are all of stone and of most graceful proportions; but unfortunately some bygone Collector with a beadle-like turn of mind thought they would look cleaner with a nice coat of whitewash, so the whole of the beautiful stone columns and carved panels and traceries are daubed over with whitewash.

Ahmedabad is famous for its wood-carving and brass fretwork, and we went to see the men at work; nearly the whole of the artisans are now gathered together to execute a gigantic order amounting to 2,000*l.* from some American. We were shown panels of brass and wood, door lintels, chairs, and carved ceilings of the most exquisite work; but to my great disappointment not a single thing was for sale, it was all

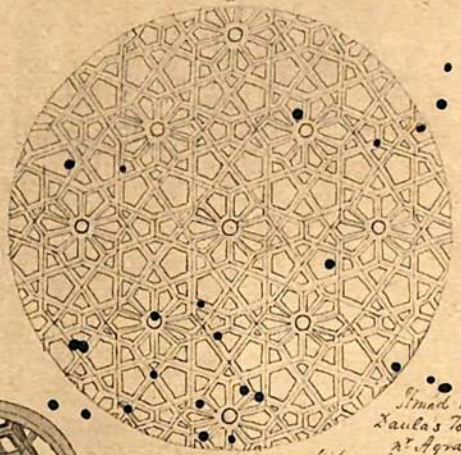
to go to America. I wished America had not been discovered.

This afternoon we drove to see Shah Alam's tomb, where the archways are filled in with the most lovely marble traceries, less geometrical and more foliated than those in Northern India. Attached to the tomb is a mosque with fine bold arches of the broad lanceolet shape seen in our churches, and at either end a tall graceful minâr like a miniature Kûtab. As is usual in all mosques, there is a large paved court in front, but it differs from most other such courts in being built over a huge water tank, and being supported entirely on arches: we went down through a narrow opening leading to the water, and there we could dimly see long vistas of arched aisles with water half way up to the columns, beautifully clear. We could see fish, and were told there are alligators also; they must find it curiously cool, but somewhat dull, I should think. I wonder they do not become white, like vegetables grown in a cellar.

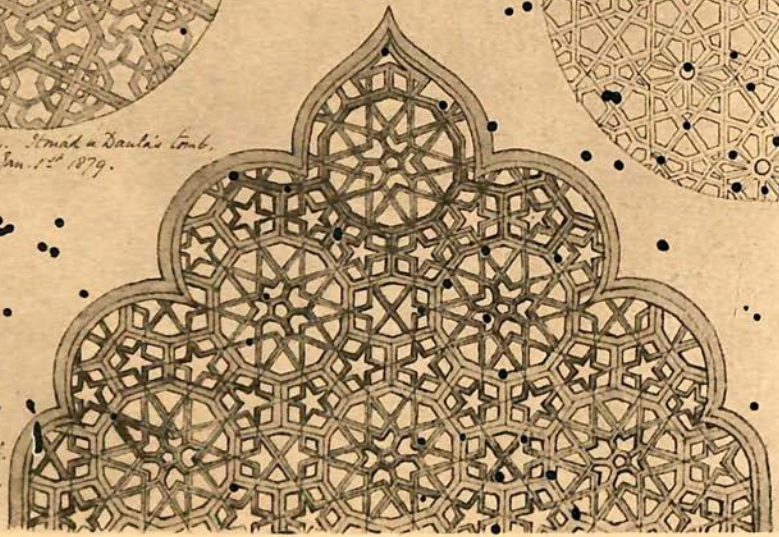
Everything here shows us that we are in the



Marble tracery. Itmád u Daula's tomb. ground floor. Jan. 1st 1879.



Itmád u Daula's Tomb Agra. Upper storey.



Tracery at Sheik Salim's Tomb. Fatehpúr Síkrí. Dec. 31st

Bombay Presidency, and looks so different from its counterpart in the North-West. The puggris here are not wound round the head every day, but are made up very tight and smart and last for months without requiring to be done up fresh; they are quite different in appearance from those of Northern India, and are generally red, yellow, or green. Their the universal vehicle is a two-wheeled covered waggonette; and a very disagreeable cramped thing it is. When we reached the station last night we could get nothing but one of these things, which will not carry any luggage at all, having only a light arched roof; so we had to put all the baggage on bullock carts, while we ourselves, the parrots and the fawn, all got into one of the covered carts.

Luckily the fawn is a most sensible, excellent traveller, and now quite understands what he has to do; he jumps after me into a carriage or break-van like a dog, and stands or lies quietly by my side whatever the jolting or noise may be.

Ahmedabad, March 17.—We have been to

see a most beautiful Jain temple near the Delhi gate. Both the exterior and interior are one mass of the richest carving, and the floor is of inlaid marbles equal in beauty to Italian work; the doorways especially are grand specimens of carving, very massive and rich, and in a beautiful pale brown marble.

The principal idol is of white marble and hung with magnificent jewels, but round the court runs a corridor from which open fifty-two cells, each guarded by brass or iron open-work doors, and each containing an idol, some black, some white, all more or less bejewelled. We were told that the temple had cost 100,000*l*., which is easy to believe, nor would that, I should think, represent the whole of the money spent on it.

We were taken by an attendant priest to see one shrine of apparently special sanctity, and as the brass doors rolled back, and the heavy scent of the incense came to us, the jewelled idol and the ever-burning lamp before it reminded us vividly of a Roman Catholic shrine.

This evening we have been to see one of the sights, and sounds, of Ahmedabad which is quite unique. The road from the city to the camp is two miles long, and is a nearly unbroken aisle formed by the over-arching branches of the bargat or banian tree, and in these trees towards sunset thousands and thousands of parrakeets (*P. torquatus*) come to roost. It is a curious sight to see them hurrying in and being *absorbed*, flock after flock, for a parrot is invisible in a tree when once he has alighted, and though we watched many hundreds settle on one tree we were unable to see one of them afterwards. They make such a screaming over their roosting that you can hardly hear yourself speak, and some years ago it was determined to try and drive them away altogether; so two companies of men were told off to slaughter the pretty ring-necked things. They killed thousands, but with so imperceptible a result that the slaughter was stopped, and the parrots now roost in safety.

The watered roads of Ahmedabad are a very noticeable feature of the place, and quite spoil

one for other less watered stations. The Collector told us that twenty-two miles of road are watered daily, at a cost of 2,000*l.* annually. The work is done almost wholly by women, and cattle carrying immense water-skins ; both were very novel and picturesque, and I much wished to get a sketch of them, but the sudden change into a hot climate—it is nearly 90° indoors—has taken all energy out of me. The air is like a furnace.

Bombay, March 20.—We left Ahmedabad in the evening, and the dust of that night's journey was a thing to be remembered. The heat obliged us to leave the windows open, and the Venetian shutters in no way kept out the dust, which sometimes fell like a sharp rain upon us : the picture we presented next morning was ludicrous.

We are at Hamilton's Hotel, a good and well-conducted one, but, like all other Bombay hotels, having no punkahs in the bedrooms : the consequence is that we suffer greatly at night, for what air there might be is kept out by

mosquito curtains, and these we dare not dispense with, for the mosquitoes swarm, and look fat and lusty.

We have been running about from one shipping office to another, climbing upstairs and downstairs, and have at last taken our passages to Naples by the Rubattino line. As the vessel does not leave till April 1, we think of spending a week at Matherân, as we find the heat of Bombay very trying and enervating.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TRIP TO MATHERÂN—400 INCHES OF RAIN—VOYAGE TO NAPLES —THE MILKY WAY—SUEZ CELEBRITIES—TOTAL ABSTINENCE—MIRAGE—MASSACRE OF BIRDS—DIARY FINISHED.

Matherân, Sunday, March 26, 1882.—We left Bombay on Friday, and after two hours by rail were put down at Nârel, a little grilling station close to the first spur of the hills. There we found tân-jâns, or chairs, to meet us, each with twelve men to it, and another two hours brought us up here, seven miles in distance and a rise of 2,500 feet. The road is very pretty, being thickly wooded nearly the whole way, and the soil bright red, like gravel without stones.

My men were a cheerful crew, and towards the end increased their pace to a good slinging trot, cheering themselves by singing a spirited though monotonous chant, led by a man with

the first and only musical voice I have ever heard possessed by a native.

The whole of the table land on which Matherân is situated is densely wooded, and the rides everywhere are like those cut in an English wood. It is a most remarkable hill, and can only be likened to an island in the air: on all sides but one—the one up which the road is made—it is absolutely precipitous, and in places where you approach the edge there is nothing between the path you are on and the plain two thousand feet below you—no sloping side, no lower ranges of hills, as at Landour, to guide your eye to the plain in the distance—*nothing* apparently to prevent your dropping a stone on to the plain itself.

It is entirely different from a precipice in the Himalayas, where opposite to you rises another mountain side. Here you are on perfectly flat land, as on a table, and you look down on to the world below with a sensation as nearly like that of being in a balloon as can be possible.

In most places the dense wood prevents any

feeling of nervousness, for you do not see or realize how near you are to the edge, but at Panorama Point, to which we rode yesterday, the sides are absolutely bare and precipitous, and few persons' nerves allow of their keeping to their saddles. There was a fierce wind blowing there, and I dreaded every moment that my eyeglasses would be whisked off into space.

The view is magnificent, and I should think unique. Here and there the vast plain is broken by a precipitous rock rising like an island—as doubtless it once was—with scarped rocky sides, the strata showing sharp and clear and level, as though built by a mason—and at the top luxuriant vegetation. Far out we could see a silver network of rivers wriggling towards the sea, and beyond them the Indian Ocean lay glittering under the setting sun, which looked red and flattened in the heat haze.

After rain the view must be glorious. Matherân has a tremendous rainfall—rarely less than 250 inches, and in one year 400. No one

remains on the hill during the rains, for fear of being washed away; so there are two seasons for visitors—one from March to the breaking of the monsoon in June, and the other after the rains are over. By coming how we miss the season for flowers, but after the rains the ground is covered with rare ferns and orchids, many of them found only on this hill. There are a good many birds and wild monkeys, but no parrots, which is odd, as the woods are full of their favourite fruits, the Jâmun (*Syzygium Jambolanum*) and the Gulhar fig.

We are here in a very comfortable quiet hotel, and though the heat is only six degrees less than in Bombay, it is just at the point where six degrees make a vast difference; 81° at night is quite bearable, but 87° really is not, without a punkah or a breeze, and with mosquito curtains to help suffocate you. The garden here is full of trees, so the ground is shaded and we have no glare or reflected heat, and the red soil is much less trying to the eyes than the usual whiteness of the Indian ground.

Naples, April 28.—We left Bombay on April 1st, and, in spite of much inevitable misery, had a favourable voyage—many degrees cooler than any previous one we ever had. The starlight nights were glorious, and I watched the Southern Cross every night till within two days of Suez, when only its three top stars were visible; when it souths, and is upright, it is a noticeable constellation, but at other times is no more striking than many another, and I cannot understand why so much fine writing has been lavished on it by travellers in southern latitudes.

One night some of us were star-gazing when an old gentleman, who was always perusing some deeply-scientific book, said pensively—'I wonder if *we* are in the Milky Way.' No one quite understood his remark, but an unpoetical and unscientific listener observed that if we were it must be the *Swiss* milky way—for, having no cow on board, we were dependent on condensed milk.

An Italian passenger who spoke very fair English amused us by telling us how that one

'day in Bombay he was looking for a restaurant where he could get luncheon, when he saw written up, '*Total Abstinence Society's Dining Rooms.*' As he felt hungry he did not go in, but he expressed a naïve wonder as to how anyone would fare in rooms dedicated to Total Abstinence. We explained to him what it really meant, and he seemed greatly surprised that such a restaurant should be needed, as if people went to any other they would not be obliged to drink wine if they did not wish to do so. We then tried to explain the principles of temperance societies, and told him that some persons felt it necessary to avoid even temptation. 'Ah! then it is only very feeble persons who go to these salons.' We asked if in Italy there were no persons who drank more than was good for them. 'Oh yes, certainly! but, then—they drink!'

At Suez we stopped some hours and gave Carlie a ride on a donkey; the one he rode was 'Mrs. Cornwallis West,' and we had pointed out to us such quaint companions in celebrity as

'The Archbishop of Canterbury,' 'Mrs. Langtry,' and 'Lefroy'—all of whom had their heads reined back cruelly tight, but were very apt to come down on their knees.

We saw a great many wrecks in the Red Sea, some of fine vessels, nearly all or all English, which, however, is not so remarkable when it is remembered that 85 per cent. of the ships that go through the canal are English.

While in the canal we twice saw a mirage—the trees and water in which looked more distinct than ever when seen through a glass; it was nearly impossible to believe that it was not real, but we watched it gradually fade away until nothing remained but a flat stretch of sand.

As we neared Italy numbers of small birds came on to the deck, some in the last stage of exhaustion, so that they could be caught without any difficulty. Knowing that the sailors would kill and eat all that fell into their hands, we exerted ourselves to catch all we could and put them in a cage, intending to set them free next

morning at Messina. Unfortunately, the cage was left in the charge of a sailor, who basely betrayed his trust, and before morning every bird had had its neck wrung and been eaten by the Italian sailors. It was indeed cruel inhospitality to the little shivering refugees, but an Italian will kill and eat every bird that flies. An Italian passenger was saying how that in his country they knew nothing about *game*, they shot every sort of bird :—'Even robins, do you not?' I asked. 'No,' he said—'not robins;' but added, 'they are not worth the shot—we net them.'

My fawn got through the voyage very well, though requiring unceasing care and attention; everyone was very kind to him, and he was often allowed to come on the quarter-deck. On landing here he excited great interest, and when he jumped into the carriage with us the street boys ran along by our side to get a sight of him, or touch his nose as he looked out over the door.

But now that we are once more in Europe, my Diary is over, as it was only intended to be a record of our home life in India, and help us to recall some of the happiest years in our lives.

THE END.

G. & C.

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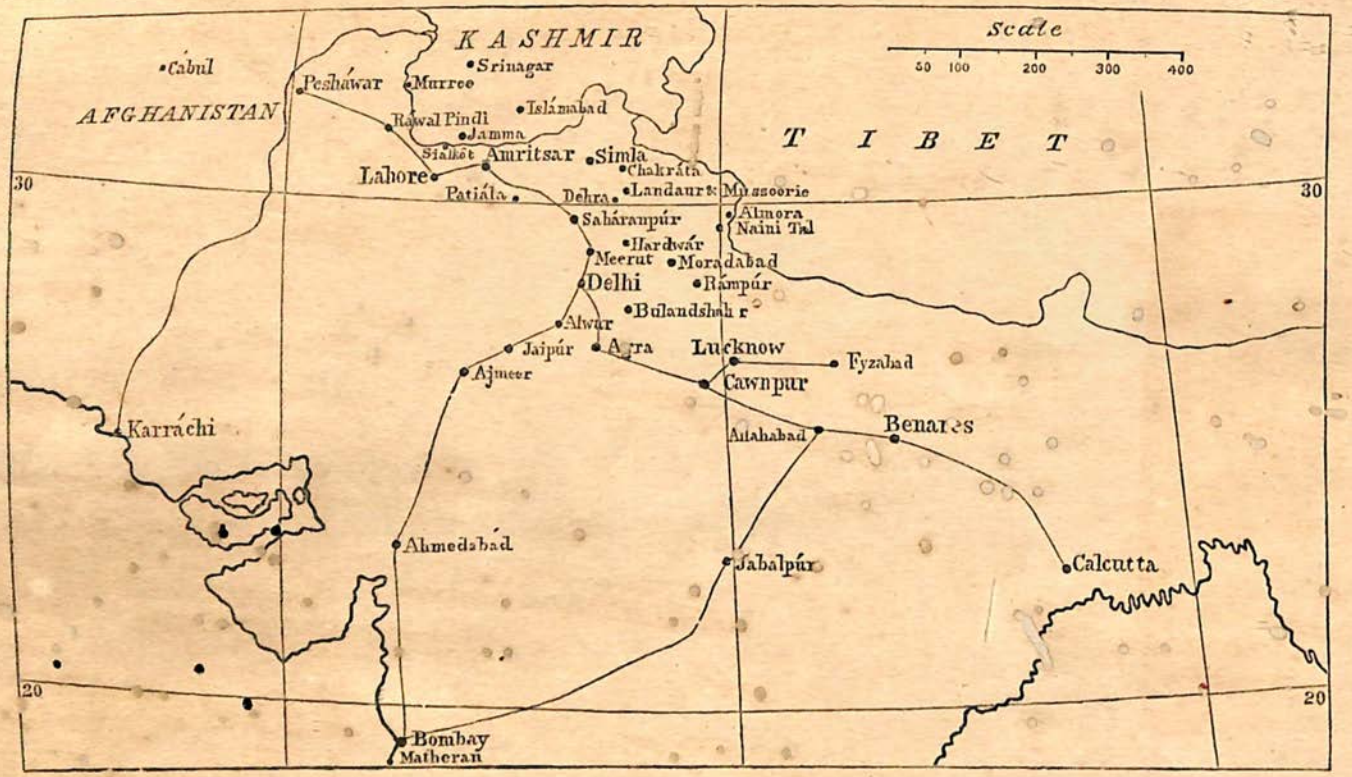
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